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THE

MINISTRY OF S. JOHN THE BAPTIST,

AND THE

BAPTISM AND TEMPTATION

OF THE

LORD JESUS CHRIST.

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OF THE

LORD JESUS CHRIST.

AN EXEGETICAL ESSAY

UPON THE FIRST THREE GOSPELS.

BY THE

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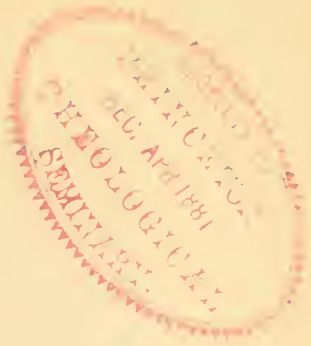


PREFACE.

WHEN God graciously condescends to make Himself known to His creatures, whatever be the way in which He speaks to us,—whether in the utterances of Prophets, or in the writings of inspired authors, or in that highest and most perfect manifestation which He has given of Himself in the Incarnate Word,—the first duty which we owe in return is, reverently and carefully to study the import of the Revelation, and to labour after the most complete conception of its meaning which our faculties will enable us to form. This we must do in order to qualify ourselves to fulfil the far higher obligation which yet remains; for the very purpose of the revelation requires, that in each step of our progress, as we advance to a more perfect understanding of its import, we receive it not merely with gratitude and reverence, but also with the most entire submission, not only of the intellect, but also of the practical will and the affections.

While, however, the Word of God summons us to the most diligent and careful use of our faculties

in investigating its import, it likewise continually makes us feel, how very limited is the extent to which our enquiries can reach. The very nature of the subject is found on every hand to oppose to our thoughts a limit, to pass which not only appears fruitless of any satisfactory result, but is chargeable with temerity bordering upon the profane. Piety, the suggestion of the highest Reason, discerns the fence surrounding the Mount on which God has descended, and fears to break in.

And most especially are we conscious of this limitation to our enquiries, when we apply our minds to contemplate the details of our Saviour's Life upon earth as they have been recorded in the holy Gospels. The fact of the Incarnation is there continually seen to interpose, overawing our investigations as well as modifying our conclusions. Nevertheless, this same blessed Fact also calls us to look with the more earnest attention. For as Christ is revealed to us as being the Son of God, so is He also revealed to us as being the Son of Man, participant of our nature in all respects except only in its sinfulness; and as such, He appears to condescend to be one like ourselves, precisely in order that we may not gaze upon Him with a torpid and merely wondering mind, but that He may become the

object of our more distinct apprehension, and of our intimate and sympathising knowledge.

It is this twofold Being characteristic of the Great Mediator, which renders the consideration of His Life, on the one hand, so obligatory, and so elevating to our minds if prosecuted aright, and on the other, so full of difficulty and even of danger. If there be irreverence or scepticism in our spirit, we shall speedily *stumble and fall and be broken.* But even though we are entirely conscious to ourselves of a willingness to learn that, and only that, which He designs to teach us, and though, in grateful acknowledgment of His stooping to come thus near, we dare not refuse to scan this glorious object with the very closest attention we can command, we yet are often compelled to feel, that even where He most evidently invites us to consider and understand, we see That before us, which we find it hard to interpret, whether to others or to our own understandings.

The candid reader of the following pages will it is hoped acknowledge, that the enquiries of which the results are therein noted down, have at all events not been pursued without a profound sense of the awful and mysterious nature of the subjects upon which they have been directed. If in any

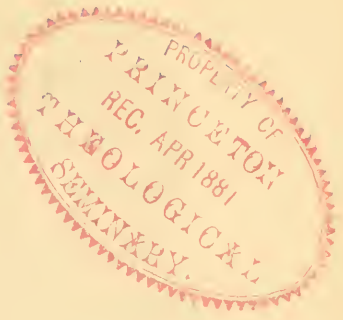
point he shall think I have misinterpreted, I trust it may yet be permitted to me to feel, that, if I have erred, the error has not been the result of irreverence or unbelief, nor animated by any self-willed love of peculiarity.

It only remains to add that the principles of interpretation herein applied to one portion of the Sacred History, I have long aimed to direct upon the Evangelical Narrative in general; and that this small volume is given forth to the world, mainly with the view of ascertaining, whether this mode of exegesis, thus executed, is likely to meet with sufficient approval, to justify a more extended publication, for which I have been accumulating and preparing materials.

E. HUXTABLE.

AN ESSAY,

&c.



Chapter I.

THE MINISTRY OF S. JOHN THE BAPTIST.

Matt. iii. 1—12. Mark i. 1—8. Luke iii. 1—17.

S. LUKE commences with stating, that the ministry of the holy Baptist began *in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar*. Now from Suetonius (*Augustus*, § 100) we learn, that Augustus died August 19, U.C. 767; i.e., according to the computation which we have adopted from the Abbot Dionysius Exiguus of the sixth century, A.D. 14. Reckoned thus, the fifteenth year of Tiberius's reign would commence August 19, A.D. 28, and end August 19, A.D. 29. It seems reasonable to suppose, that the designation of this date is intended by S. Luke to mark the era of our Lord's Baptism rather than the commencement of S. John's ministry; for the latter is of secondary interest compared with the former, whilst we have, nevertheless, no other determination of the more important date than that which is here given. If then we assign the close of A.D. 28 (U.C. 781), as the time of the Baptism of our Lord, and suppose Him to have been then thirty years old, we shall be brought back to A.C. 3 (U.C. 751) for the year of His Nativity.

Now it is certain that our Lord was born before the death of Herod; and we are told by Josephus (*Antiq.* XIV. 14. 5), that Herod was declared king by the Romans in the second consulate of C. Domitius Calvinus, i.e. A.C. 40 (U.C. 714); and again (*Antiq.* XVII. 8. 1), that he died thirty-seven years after; which would likewise fall on A.C. 3 (U.C. 751);—the year just arrived at as that in which Christ was born.

There does not seem to be any great improbability in this conclusion; but yet we cannot feel certain of its truth. S. Luke's determination of the age of Jesus at His Baptism (ὡσεὶ ἐτῶν τριάκοντα, v. 23[1]) leaves it uncertain whether He was not either somewhat older or somewhat younger than thirty. If older, e.g. 31, we should be brought back to A.C. 4 (U.C. 750) for the year of His Birth, which would certainly allow more time to elapse before Herod's death, and agree better with the *two years old and under* of S. Matthew (ii. 16). If younger, especially if His Baptism be assigned to A.D. 29 (U.C. 782), the year of His Birth would fall after that of Herod's death. In this case, we should be compelled, either to give up the chronology of Josephus, or to accede to the hypothesis which puts the commencement of the reign of Tiberius as conceived of by S. Luke, not at the time of Augustus's death, but at a period somewhat earlier,

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[1] Of course the word ἀρχόμενος is to be understood of the commencement of our Lord's public ministry (compare Acts i. 1), and not as governing ἐτῶν. For the words, *beginning to be of an age*, would require to have a definite age assigned, and are inconsistent with the indefinite expression, *about thirty years*.

when, according to the statement of Tacitus (*Annal.* I. 3) and Suetonius, (*Tiberius*, § 20, 21), Augustus made him his colleague in the empire; for as this arrangement chiefly concerned the provinces, it is certainly possible that S. Luke, as a provincial, may have dated Tiberius's accession from this time. This hypothesis is however liable to the grave objections, that S. Luke appears to have written for Roman readers, and therefore is not likely to have employed a chronology adapted chiefly to inhabitants of the provinces; and that no instance has hitherto been adduced, in which such a mode of reckoning has been employed by any other author[2].

The holy Evangelist adds a specification of the several princes at that time in authority in those countries of, and near, the Holy Land, with which the Jews were most concerned.

(1) In Judæa, in which was the capital, *Pontius Pilate* was *governor*. As applied to Pilate, this term (ἡγεμὼν) expresses the subordinate office of Procurator, which is commonly represented in Greek by ἐπίτροπος, sometimes by ἔπαρχος. After Archelaus's removal (A.D. 6), Judæa and Samaria were attached to the province of Syria (προσθήκη τῆς Συρίας, Joseph. *Antiq.* XVIII. 1. 1), which at that time was under the government of Publ. Quirinus; and were put under a

[2] Further particulars on this difficult question, on which no certain conclusion seems attainable, the reader will find accumulated in Winer's *Realwörterbuch*, Article *Jesus*, Vol. I. pp. 656, 657, and Kuinöl *in h. locum*. If he wishes to prosecute the enquiry, he will not forget, among longer-established authorities, to consult Mr. Greswell's *Harmony*, and the Duke of Manchester's *Times of Daniel*.

Procurator;—an officer, which in provinces reckoned as Cæsar's own, (*propriæ Cæsaris*, i.e. of which the Emperor was himself the Proconsul, and which he administered by *deputies*, *Legati*,) closely resembled the Quæstors of those provinces which were governed by Proconsuls nominated by the Senate. But it would seem, that in consequence of the turbulent spirit which distinguished the population, it was found necessary to invest the Procurator of Judæa with greater power than such an officer usually possessed; for Josephus tells us (*Bell. Jud.* II. 8. 1) that Coponius, the first Procurator of Judæa, an eques, had the power of life and death, which, as we see in the Gospels, was likewise possessed by Pilate; and again (*Antiq.* XVIII. 1. 1), that he was sent along with Quirinus ἡγησόμενος Ἰουδαίων τῇ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἐξουσίᾳ. At the same time, the Procurator was subordinate to the Legatus of Syria, who was authorised to interfere, and did interfere in various ways, with the administration of the district, as we see in Josephus's history.

Of these Procurators, Pilate was the sixth; and he was succeeded by three others, when Caligula gave the country which they governed to Herod Agrippa (A.D. 41). Upon Agrippa's death (A.D. 44), Procurators were again appointed, of whom Felix was the fourth (A.D. 52), and Festus the fifth (A.D. 61). These Procurators, as usual in the provinces of Cæsar, were either equites or freedmen of Cæsar. Pilate succeeded Valerius Gratus (A.D. 25), and held the office ten or eleven years, when he was deposed by Vitellius, then Legatus of Syria, and sent to Rome to be

tried by the Emperor for the misgovernment of his province.

(2) *Herod was Tetrarch of Galilee*[3]. Herod the Great in his will, which was ratified by the Emperor, had left Herod Antipas in possession of Galilee in conjunction with Peræa. He was deposed by Caligula (A.D. 39), and banished to Lyons in Gaul, where he died.

(3) *Philip his brother was Tetrarch of Ituræa and the region of Trachonitis.* He likewise held his principality by virtue of the will of Herod the Great. He died A.D. 33.

The region here called Ituræa probably received its name from Jetur, one of the sons of Ishmael (Cf. 1 Chron. i. 31; v. 19; in which latter passage the Septuagint has Ἰτουραίων). It is still called Jedur, and lies between the sea of Tiberias and Damascus. Its precise limits in ancient times are not known[4].

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[3] A Tetrarch was properly one who ruled the fourth part of a given district; as, e. g. each of the three Gallic tribes which settled in Galatia was divided into four governments called *Tetrarchies*, till they were all merged into one kingdom under Dejotarus. The title, as well as those of *Ethnarch* and *Phylarch*, appears to have been occasionally conceded by the Romans to princes, whom they did not think proper to honour with the higher title of *King*.

[4] According to Josephus in one passage (*Antiq.* XVII. 8. 1), Philip was ruler of Gaulonitis, Trachonitis, and Paneas; in another place (*Antiq.* XVII. 11. 4), where apparently he enumerates all Philip's possessions, Batanæa, Trachonitis, and Auranitis, with "a part of what was called the House (or possession) of Zenodorus," i. e. a part of Abilene, are described as paying him 300 talents as tribute. Did S. Luke regard Auranitis, Paneas, and Batanæa as comprehended under Ituræa, or does he content himself with naming the most westerly and the most easterly districts, omitting those three former districts as lying between these two latter ones?

(4) *Lysanias was Tetrarch of Abilene.* Abila lay about seventy miles N.W. of Damascus, giving its name to Abilene, of which the limits cannot be precisely determined. Nothing is known of this Lysanias beyond what S. Luke here states[5].

(5) *Annas and Caiaphas were the High Priests*[6]. Properly there could be only one High Priest at a time; and now it was Caiaphas who held the function.

Annas had formerly been High Priest, having been appointed by Quirinus (Joseph. *Antiq.* XVIII. 2. 1[7]);

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[5] There is a Lysanias mentioned by Josephus as tetrarch of this district; but he was slain by Antony at Cleopatra's request, A. C. 33 (*Antiq.* XV. 4. 1). After his death, Zenodorus rented it (*Bell. Jud.* I. 20. 4: *Antiq.* XV. 10. 1); but in consequence of his not repressing the banditti which infested the country, it was taken from him, and given to Herod the Great. Afterwards a part of it, as we have seen above, fell to Philip; but we also here learn from S. Luke, that the greater part was now under another Lysanias. It is by no means improbable that this is the Lysanias meant by Josephus (*Antiq.* XVIII. 6. 10. *Bell. Jud.* II. 11. 5), when he says that Caligula gave Agrippa "the tetrarchy of Lysanias," and again (*Antiq.* XX. 7. 1. *Bell. Jud.* II. 12. 8), that the "tetrarchy" or "kingdom of Lysanias" was given by Claudius to Agrippa II.

[6] Instead of ἀρχιερέων, modern writers (Knapp, Lachmann, Scholz, and Tischendorf,) concur in reading ἀρχιερέως. The advocates for the *textus receptus* argue that the original reading being ἀρχιερέων, was probably altered into ἀρχιερέως, in consequence of copyists knowing that there was regularly only one ἀρχιερεὺς at a time. On the other hand, it is with much greater plausibility argued for ἀρχιερέως, that it was altered into the plural in consequence of two names being mentioned, and that it is the more difficult reading.

[7] Josephus constantly uses the form Ananus, in Hebrew חָנָן. In the New Testament it is shortened into Ἄννας, as Λούκανος into Λουκᾶς, and Σιλουανός into Σίλας.—Caiaphas is the Chaldaic כֵּיפָא, which, as applied to S. Peter, appears in Greek as Κηφᾶς.

but he had been deposed by Valerius Gratus, who appointed Ishmael (A.D. 14). In the following year, however, the Procurator removed Ishmael, and put Eleazar, son of Annas, in his place. The next year he again changed the functionary, appointing Simon, who after holding the office one year only, was compelled to give place to Joseph Caiaphas, son-in-law to Annas (John xviii. 13), who was High Priest when Pilate came into Judæa as Procurator, A.D. 25, and continued in the office till A.D. 36, when he was deposed by Marcellus, Pilate's successor.

After Caiaphas, were appointed successively Theophilus (who declined accepting the office) and Jonathan, both of them sons of Annas. Agrippa afterwards raised to the dignity Ananus, another son of Annas; and subsequently (A.D. 43) a grandson named Matthias. (For these facts relating to the High Priesthood, cf. Josephus *Antiq.* XVIII. 2. 2; XIX. 6. 2 and 4; XX. 9. 1 and 7).

This statement sufficiently shews how important a person Annas was. Josephus says of him: "Now the report goes, that this elder Ananus proved a most fortunate man; for he had five sons, who had all performed the office of a High Priest to God, and he had himself enjoyed that dignity a long time formerly; which had never happened to any other of our High Priests." (*Antiq.* XX. 9. 1. Whiston's Translation). His being here named High Priest along with Caiaphas, though somewhat strange, agrees with the circumstance that our Lord was brought before him previously to his being brought before Caiaphas (Joh. xviii. 13, 24). Possibly he was deputy High Priest,

which some identify with the Sagan (סגן) of the Rabbins[8]. He is here styled High Priest, partly in consequence of his having been formerly in possession of that dignity, and partly because of his holding for such a length of time so preponderating an influence, and actually sharing in the administration.

It was, then, at this time that, in the words of S. Luke, *the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness;*—the phrase which so often in the Old Testament expresses the supernatural illation into the mind of a prophet of some message from God, which he was to communicate to others[9]. The message in the present instance related to the immediate nearness of the Messianic dispensation and the necessity of preparing for its revelation.

The holy Evangelist had stated before (i. 80) that *John was in the wilderness till his manifestation unto Israel;* by which we are to understand, that he lived thus in a state of solitude as he grew up towards the age of manhood; for we are not called upon to infer with Origen, (*Homil.* XI. *in Luc.*) that he lived in the wilderness from early childhood. There is much probability in the supposition[10] that his

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[8] See Lightfoot, *Hor. Hebr. et Talm. in h. loc.* Lightfoot denies that the Sagan was deputy High-Priest.

[9] It is the Hebrew הָיָה דְבַר יְהוָה אֶל־פּ (Jeremiah i. 2). The formal style with which S. Luke commences this chapter, specifying not only the date, but also John's parentage, disconnects it from the two preceding in a way which suggests the inference, that the holy Evangelist regarded his narrative as commencing here, and that he intended the first two chapters as an *Introduction.*

[10] See J. J. Hess, *Lebensgeschichte Jesu*, Vol. I. p. 45. 8th edition, Zurich.

parents, being so far advanced in years when he was born, died while he was yet quite young; and that it was upon their decease that he had betaken himself to this hermit-life.

Oportebat Monachum esse! exclaims the great Roman Catholic commentator in great triumph[11]; we may however add, in qualification of this remark, that he was a "monk" without *vows* of celibacy; for though the vows of a Nazarite seem to have been divinely imposed upon him from the very first, yet these did not involve the obligation to live a single life; neither is there any trace in the Old Testament history, that such an obligation was ever regarded as an act of piety by any of the Jewish saints.

By growing up thus, when the proper time was come, this holy "man of God" stepped forth out of his concealment with the greater independence, not only of character, but also of position. He started into view suddenly unlooked for and unknown;—*a Voice* of one crying in the wilderness. Moreover his growing spirit was by this isolation saved from the contagion of human vice, (as Theophylact observes, ἐξω τῆς τῶν πολλῶν κακίας), and from the taint of Jewish errors, whether Pharisaic or Sadducean; for it was developed under the direction of God's Spirit alone. Further, the resemblance to Elijah was thus heightened; for that prophet had been wont to appear constantly in solitudes.

S. Matthew (v. 4) and S. Mark (v. 6) add par-

[11] Maldonatus, *Comment. in loc.*

ticulars respecting his dress and his diet, which are evidently designed to illustrate the austerity and self-denial by which he was distinguished. His raiment was made of camel's hair, woven into a coarse texture, such as modern travellers in the East testify to be still employed for tents and other purposes[12]. Indeed what is so frequently mentioned in Scripture by the name of sackcloth appears to have been hair-cloth[13]. So that the dress of the holy Baptist was of the sort afterwards so much affected by devotees in the Christian Church. Perhaps we are to understand the words *hairy man* in 2 Kings i. 8, (אִישׁ שֵׂעָר), applied to Elijah, in the same way, as we find it likewise stated in that passage, that the ancient Prophet used a *leathern girdle*. The *rough garment*, in Zechariah xiii. 4, properly *mantle of hair* (אַדֶּרֶת שֵׂעָר), may also have been of a similar description; though many understood this last most especially, as being a skin with the fur on it. This dress of the Baptist, mentioned here as a proof of his austerity, is not to be paralleled by the *sheep-skins* and *goat-skins* spoken of Heb. xi. 37, which are referred to as evidence of destitution.

The food of the holy Prophet was such as might be found in rural solitudes. It was *wild honey*, i. e. honey deposited by bees which were not the objects of human care, but roamed free in the wildernesses (com-

[12] See Winer's *Realwörterbuch*, Art. *Kameel*.

[13] Dr. Kitto (a high authority on such a subject) in his *Illustrated Commentary* on 2 Samuel iii. 31.

pare 1 Sam. xiv. 24—32)[14], and *locusts*, mentioned as an allowed article of food in Leviticus xi. 22[15].

It does not appear to have been altogether a strange thing, that persons aiming at a more than ordinary severity of religious feeling should thus withdraw themselves from the world[16]. In Egypt the Therapeutæ had adopted that eremitic mode of life[17] which afterwards flourished so remarkably in that country. But there was for John the attraction of a far higher example than theirs, in Elijah, whilst there was likewise the impulse of a higher influence; for we can hardly doubt, but the Divine Hand Itself directed the course of the great Forerunner, in thus devoting himself to solitary devotion and an ascetic practice.

As S. John Baptist acted under the direction of the Divine Spirit, there must have been an intended significance in the mode of life which he pursued;

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[14] Others, however, understand by the expression a vegetable honey distilled from the trees, called by the chemists, *manna*. See Kitto's *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, Art. *Manna*. On the other hand, Winer, *Realwörterbuch*, Art. *Honey*, refers to Rosenmüller ad Bochart, III. 376, as furnishing a satisfactory refutation of the grounds for this opinion.

[15] Dr. Kitto, in his note on Lev. xi. 22, in his *Illustr. Comment.* compares them in taste to shrimps or prawns.

[16] Josephus speaks of having himself attended the instructions, and imitated the example, of one Banus, "who lived in the desert, and used no other clothing than grew upon trees, and had no other food than what grew of its own accord." (*Life*, II. Whiston's Transl.) Banus however may, as Hudson remarks, have been himself herein an imitator of the holy Baptist.

[17] See Guericke, *Handbuch der Kirchengeschichte*, Vol. I. p. 36. De Wette, *Lehrbuch der hebräisch-jüdischen. Archäologie*, p. 284.

—not merely that he should be like Elijah, in order to accomplish the prediction of Malachi, but something more real and essential. This is indicated by Bengel (*Gnomon* in Matth. iii. 4). Habitus quoque et victus Ioannis prædicabat, congruens cum doctrina et officio; qualis pœnitentium esse debet, talem hic minister pœnitentiæ semper habuit. His constant use of hair-cloth, i. e. sackcloth (see 1 Kings xxi. 27), and his diet, which approximated to a continued fast, as nearly as the necessities of human existence would allow, made his appearance an acted prophecy, such as the Prophets of old were wont so often to exhibit, a *sermo propheticus realis*. (Hengstenberg, *Christologie*, Vol. III. p. 461). It was perhaps accidental, but is yet deserving of notice, that the sharp contrast exhibited by the manner in which John and the Lord of the New Economy respectively appeared, marks the contrast between the stern and restrictive spirit of the Law and the milder and more genial temper which characterises the Gospel. (Compare Luke vii. 33, 34, with Gal. iii. 24.)

At length, however, the mournful contemplation of the extreme corruption of his age, and the aspirations after a heavenly interposition on the behalf of his people, which we cannot doubt largely occupied S. John Baptist's mind during his sojourn in the desert, were crowned by the commission descending upon him to proclaim the Great Restorer, as now about immediately to appear.

Moved by this Divine impulse, he came forth from the more retired wilderness where he had previously lived, and came into that part of the wilderness of Judæa,

which adjoined the plain of the Jordan. This plain is called by S. Luke *the country about Jordan*, ἡ περίχωρος τοῦ Ἰορδάνου;—a phraseology found likewise in the Septuagint, as the rendering of the Hebrew כִּכַּר הַיַּרְדֵּן in Genesis xiii. 10, for which we have sometimes simply הַכִּכָּר (Genesis xiii. 12; xix. 17). I cannot do better for the illustration of this point, than take the liberty to transcribe Dr. Kitto's lucid description of the locality, which is evidently derived from personal observation. "On leaving the lake of Gennesareth, the river enters a very broad valley, or Ghor, by which name the natives designate a depressed tract or plain between mountains. This name is applied to the plain of the Jordan, not only between the lake of Gennesareth and the Dead Sea, but quite across the Dead Sea, and to some distance beyond. The valley varies in width from five to ten miles between the mountains on each side. The river does not make its way straight through the midst of the Ghor; it flows first near the western hills, then near the eastern, but advances to the Dead Sea through the middle of the valley. Within this valley there is a lower one, and within that, in some parts, another still lower, through which the river flows; the inner valley is about half-a-mile wide, and is generally green and beautiful, covered with trees and bushes, whereas the upper or large valley is, for the most part, sandy or barren. The distance between the two lakes in a direct line, is about sixty miles." (*Cyclopædia of Bibl. Literature*, Vol. II. pp. 459, 460.)

S. Matthew speaks of *the wilderness of Judæa* as the district in which John commenced his preach-

ing. This forms the eastern side of Judæa, reaching to the Dead Sea. We may therefore infer, that he commenced his preaching in this neighbourhood, and afterwards moved on along the Ghor northward. Hence S. Luke says, that he came into *all* the country about Jordan (εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν περίχωρον τοῦ Ἰορδάνου). The Apostle John in his Gospel (iii. 23) speaks of him at a later period as at Ænon, which was about two-thirds of the way up the valley.

The subject of his preaching was the nearness of the *kingdom of heaven*, and the consequent necessity of *repentance* (Matth. iii. 1, 2), and of *baptism* (Mark i. 4. Luke iii. 3), in preparation for its approach.

The term *Kingdom of Heaven*, which is the form always found in S. Matthew, and in him alone, or the equivalent term *Kingdom of God*, which we find employed in its stead in S. Mark and S. Luke, does not occur in the Old Testament; but there can be little doubt, but that it was drawn from the representation given in the book of Daniel of the Fifth Monarchy there foretold as about to rise. The language employed by the holy Prophet was such as naturally to suggest such an appellation, in distinction from the *kingdom of Babylon*, the *kingdom of Persia*, the *kingdom of Greece*, and the *kingdom of Rome*. (Dan. ii. 44.) *In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed.* (Cf. also Dan. vii. 14—27.) This is the most concrete form in which that sovereignty is represented which, in the prophecies of the Old Testament, is so often assigned to God the King of Israel, reigning

through the Christ. (Compare Isai. ii. 1—4; Micah iv. 1—3. Isai. xi. 1. seq. Psalm LXXXV. 11, 12. Jer. xxiii. 5. seq.; xxxiii. 14. seq. Ezek. xxxiv. 23. seq.; xxxvii. 24, seq.)

The Jews[18], as well as those other Eastern nations which are described by Tacitus and Suetonius as entertaining the expectation of an universal monarchy which was to arise in Judæa, no doubt thought of this Kingdom of the God of Heaven as a worldly kingdom. Whether they were wholly mistaken in their interpretation of the language of prophecy, is not perhaps so clear as some suppose. At least it is conceiveable, either that such predictions of national glory are yet to be realised, or, if not so, that they were not intended as historical relations of what was actually to be, so much as conditional promises which God would have fulfilled on behalf of His own people, but for their rejection of His Son.

But whatever was the purpose of the Divine Mercy towards Israel, in the result God has developed a purely spiritual Kingdom exercised over a spiritual Israel. And this must have been the king-

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[18] Lightfoot informs us, that the expression מלכות השמים occurs often in the Rabbinical writers; generally in a mystical sense for true piety; but also for "the exhibition and revelation of the Messiah," as in the holy Gospels. *Hor. Hebr.*, &c. in Matth. iii. 2. As they would not have borrowed it from the Christian Church, they must either have derived it from the preaching of the holy Baptist, or from Jewish usage even prior to his ministry. In the Gospels it appears like a term taken up from the ordinary language of the country, in which indeed its almost certain origination in the Messianic prophecies of Daniel makes it very probable that it had previously been current.

dom of God proclaimed by John the Baptist, as then actually near.

S. Mark (i. 4) and S. Luke (iii. 3) state, that he came *preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins* (κηρύσσων βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν). This leads us to enquire, what relation this baptism bare to other baptisms previously existing, and what constituted its own significance and value.

If we look into the Law of God given through Moses, we find that the lustratory use of water is very frequently enjoined in that law, as an integral part of those many purificatory processes which the maintenance of ceremonial purity rendered necessary. So far as those processes were themselves symbolical, the lustratory use of water was so too; but it does not appear to have been ever employed alone for the purpose of expressing penitence, either as enjoined by the Law, or as practised by the Jews. It was merely a ceremonial ablution.

It has been eagerly debated, whether it was not before this time enjoined by Jewish usage upon proselytes, as a symbol of their admission into the Jewish theocracy[19]. The whole evidence, however, leads to the conclusion, that if proselyte-baptism was practised so early, it was regarded only as a rite of ceremonial lustration (compare Mark vii. 4), and as a part of

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[19] The reader will find a short summary of the controversy, and of the most important points of argument, in Winer's *Realwörterbuch*, Art. *Proselyten*. Also, a brief statement of reasons in favour of the early date of the practice (which do not appear to my own mind satisfactory), is given in Dr. Kitto's *Cyclopædia*, Art. *Proselytes*.

that purificatory process which was felt necessary, in order to cleanse one labouring under the manifold defilements (i.e. ceremonial defilements) of heathenism, before he could be regarded as fit to be a member of the (ceremonially) pure Israel[20]. There is, further, nothing to make it at all probable, that this proselyte-baptism differed from the baptisms of the Law in one very important point, in which the Baptism of John, as well as that ordained by our Lord, did differ from them;—in the baptisms of the Law, which were performed in the normal mode of immersion, the baptism was gone through by the man himself who was then under the process of purification, and was not administered to him by another[21]. It was only in those

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[20] On this question it is necessary to keep clearly before our minds the distinction between ceremonial and real pollution. To illustrate this distinction I may observe, that the Divine Infant Christ was Himself ceremonially unclean after His Birth, and that likewise the blessed Virgin was made ceremonially unclean by giving Him birth, though so supernaturally conceived. Both Mother and Child needed purification. In like manner it behoved Christ to undergo the purificatory symbol of circumcision, Luke ii. 21, 22 (in which latter verse the true reading seems to be τοῦ καθαρισμοῦ αὐτῶν). The defilements of the law were purely ceremonial, and their essence had no reference whatever to moral guilt.

[21] Olshausen. *Biblischer Commentar*. Vol. I. p. 154, *note*. Tholuck has made the same observation. The following extract from Maimonides, given by Lightfoot (in Matth. iii. 6. Vol. XI. p. 61, in Pitman's Edition of his works) fully substantiates it in reference to proselyte baptism. "As soon as he [the proselyte] grows whole of the wound of circumcision, they bring him to baptism; and being placed in water, they again instruct him in some weightier, and in some lighter, commands of the law. Which being heard, he plunges himself, and comes up, and behold he is an Israelite in all things." In respect to the washings of the law, the reader can satisfy himself by referring to the various passages in which they are prescribed.

abnormal baptisms in which the purificatory element (e. g. blood, or water mixt with ashes) was not plentiful enough, or otherwise improper to be employed for immersion, that the rite was administered by another, who was, I believe, always a priest. Whereas the Baptism of John, as well as that ordained by Christ, was administered by another; in the former case always (so far as appears) by the Baptist's own hands;—the only exception being the case in which it was administered by the Apostles of Christ before His death; for the Baptism spoken of John iv. 2, appears to have been in essence the same as the Baptism of John. (Compare together Matth. iii. 2; iv. 17, and x. 7.)

In these two respects, then, the Baptism of John appears to differ from those enjoined by the Law; first, the latter were used as means of purification from ceremonial defilement, which the Baptism of John was not[22]; and, secondly, the Baptism of John

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[22] This is stated very clearly by S. Chrysostom. *Homil. de Baptismo*, §§ 2, 3. Τὸ μὲν οὖν Ἰουδαϊκὸν καθάρσιον ἁμαρτημάτων μὲν οὐκ ἀπήλλαττε, ῥύπων δὲ σωματικῶν μόνον [Cp. Hebr. ix. 13; 1 Pet. iii. 21]. τὸ δὲ ἡμέτερον οὐ τοιοῦτον ἀλλὰ πολλῷ μεῖζον καὶ πολλῆς γέμον χάριτος· καὶ γὰρ ἁμαρτημάτων ἀπαλλάττει, καὶ ψυχὴν ἀποσμήχει καὶ πνεύματος δίδωσι χορηγίαν. τὸ δὲ τοῦ Ἰωάννου τοῦ μὲν Ἰουδαικοῦ σφόδρα ὑψηλότερον ἦν· τοῦ δὲ ἡμετέρου ταπεινότερον, καθάπερ γέφυρά τις ὂν ἑκατέρων τούτων τῶν βαπτισμάτων, ἀπ' ἐκείνου πρὸς τοῦτο δι' ἑαυτοῦ χειραγωγοῦν· οὐ γὰρ δὴ εἰς παρατήρησιν καθαρμῶν σωματικῶν αὐτοὺς ἐνῆγεν, κ. τ. λ. He denies, however, to John's baptism, the collation of forgiveness. His explanation of S. Luke's words in v. 3, is the following: Εἰπὼν γὰρ ὅτι ἦλθε κηρύσσων βάπτισμα μετανοίας ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ τῆς Ἰουδαίας, ἐπήγαγεν, εἰς ἄφεσιν· ὡσανεὶ ἔλεγε, διὰ τοῦτο αὐτοὺς ἔπειθεν ὁμολογεῖν καὶ μετανοεῖν ἐπὶ τοῖς ἁμαρτήμασιν, οὐχ ἵνα κολασθῶσιν, ἀλλ' ἵνα εὐκολώ-

was administered by John (or some other divinely-commissioned person), and not performed by the candidates themselves. To these we must add, as a third distinguishing feature, that whereas those baptisms were repeated upon the occasion of renewed defilement, this, as well as Christian Baptism, was undergone only once. These three features justify us in regarding the Baptism of John as an entirely new rite.

That it was of Divine appointment is apparent, not merely from the question which our Lord proposed to the Jewish rulers (Luke xx. 4): *The Baptism of John, was it from heaven or of men?* but from the words of the holy Baptist himself: *He that sent me to baptize with water.* (John i. 33[23].)

τερον τὴν μετὰ ταῦτα ἄφεσιν δέξωνται. εἰ μὴ γὰρ κατέγνωσαν ἑαυτῶν, οὐκ ἂν οὐδὲ τὴν χάριν ᾔτησαν· μὴ ζητοῦντες δὲ οὐκ ἂν οὐδὲ τῆς ἀφέσεως ἔτυχον (*Homil.* x. *in Matth*). Just before he had given his reason for believing that the forgiveness of sins did not accompany the baptism of John, in these words: οὔπω γὰρ τῆς θυσίας προσενηνεγμένης, οὐδὲ τοῦ Πνεύματος καταβάντος, οὐδὲ τῆς ἁμαρτίας λυθείσης, οὐδὲ τῆς ἔχθρας ἀνῃρημένης, οὐδὲ τῆς κατάρας ἀφανισθείσης, πῶς ἔμελλεν ἄφεσις γίνεσθαι; Olshausen (*Commentar*, Vol. I. pp. 152, 158) takes the same view. Hengstenberg's view, propounded in his *Christologie*, Vol. III. p. 463, is, I think, much juster.

[23] It has been inferred by some, from the question of the Jews (Joh. i. 25), *Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?* that there existed previously among the Jews the expectation that *Elias*, or *that prophet*, would administer a baptism; an expectation which has been explained by a reference to Ezek. xxxvi. 25; xxxvii. 23. But the question of the Jews does not justify this inference. John declared that he baptized in preparation for the new dispensation; it was therefore natural that the Jews should ask why *he* should do so, if he was neither the Christ, nor one of the expected forerunners of the Christ.

Looking more closely at the import of the rite, we see that it is called *the baptism of repentance.* (Luke v. 3.) This agrees with Matth. iii. 11. *βαπτίζω ὑμᾶς ἐν ὕδατι εἰς μετάνοιαν.* Whether we retain the rendering of our Authorised Version, *I baptize you unto repentance;* or, in conformity with the construction of 1 Cor. xii. 13, *εἰς ἓν σῶμα ἐβαπτίσθημεν,* and other passages, *I baptize you into repentance;* the expression clearly conveys the notion, that his baptism was designed to introduce men into a state of professed penitence. In which account also S. Luke styles it, as we have seen, *the baptism of repentance*[24]. Before the Christ could prove the salvation of Israel, it was necessary that Israel should repent of its sins and put itself into a new state of mind;—a state of humble obedience and devout waiting upon God[25].

S. Mark (v. 4) and S. Luke (v. 3) add, *for the remission of sins* (*εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν.*) This by very many has been interpreted as meaning: *with a view to the remission of sins afterwards to be received from the Christ*[26]. But it may fairly be questioned, whether

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[24] For the construction of the genitive in *βάπτισμα μετανοίας*, De Wette compares *ἀνάστασις ζωῆς, = ἀνας. εἰς ζωήν*, in Joh. v. 29. (*Kurzgefasstes exegetisches Handbuch.*)

[25] *Μετάνοια* is the change of mind which is the *result* of *μεταμέλεια*, or of *λύπη*. 2 Cor. vii. 10. *ἡ γὰρ κατὰ Θεὸν λύπη μετάνοιαν εἰς σωτηρίαν ἀμεταμέλητον κατεργάζεται.*

[26] See S. Chrysostom quoted in the last page. So Tertullian and others: among whom S. Augustine gives the following defence of this view; whilst at the same time, in the very way in which he defends it, he shows clearly that he is not so thoroughly satisfied of its certain truth as to refuse consideration to the other interpretation. Quapropter quanquam ita credam baptizasse Johannem in aqua pœnitentiæ in remissionem peccatorum, ut ab eo baptizatis in spe

the words themselves, or the teaching of the Scriptures in other places, will bear out this explanation. The words no more in this case imply a reference to a distant future than in Matth. iii. 11: *βαπτίζω εἰς μετάνοιαν*. In both, the results pointed to by the *εἰς* are most naturally conceived as immediate rather than as prospective. Moreover, just the same words are used by S. Peter (Acts ii. 38), *μετανοήσατε, καὶ βαπτισθήτω ἕκαστος ὑμῶν ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν*. And as Christian Baptism confers upon the qualified recipient the forgiveness of sins immediately, it seems very arbitrary to understand the same words in the present case as referring to a forgiveness of sins not immediate. And if we advert to the doctrine of the Old Testament Scriptures, we find that forgiveness is in them continually promised to men as following immediately upon their repentance, which is represented as the necessary and only necessary prerequisite on their part[27]. What difference

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remitterentur peccata, re ipsa vero in Domini baptismo id fieret: (sicut resurrectio quæ exspectaretur in finem spe in nobis facta est, sicut dicit Apostolus, *quia simul nos excitavit et simul sedere fecit in cœlestibus*, et idem dicit, *spe enim salvi facti sumus;* nam et ipse Johannes cum dicat, *ego quidem baptizo vos in aqua in pœnitentiam in remissionem peccatorum,* Dominum videns ait, *ecce Agnus Dei, ecce qui tollit peccata mundi;*) tamen ne quisque contendat etiam in baptismo Johannis dimissa esse peccata, sed aliquam ampliorem sanctificationem eis quos jussit Paulus denuo baptizari per baptismum Christi esse collatam, non ago pugnaciter. *De Baptismo contra Donatistas. Lib.* v. *cap.* 12.

[27] Of course, repentance is the prerequisite only. It is neither the meritorious cause, which is to be sought for only in the merits of Christ; nor the immediate channel, for this is faith in God—faith involved in, and actuating, repentance.

was herein made by the full revelation of the Gospel, it is not necessary now to enquire: the Jews as yet were dealt with according to the principles of the Old Testament revelation; and according to these, forgiveness had ever been promised upon the simple condition of repentance. Whether therefore we translate εἰς *into* or *unto*, the meaning of the whole clause κηρύσσων βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, would seem to be this: *preaching that men should repent, and that, by submitting to receive baptism at his hands, they should declare that they were penitent, while thereby they would also receive that forgiveness of sins without which they could not be meet to share in the blessings of the Kingdom of God.* For whilst unforgiven, they were not meet recipients for further manifestations of the Divine favour[28].

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[28] The diversity, and indeed essential diversity, of the baptism of John and Christian Baptism, is clearly marked by the addition which S. Peter makes (Acts ii. 38) to the promise of forgiveness: *and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*, and by the fact recorded Acts xix. 1—6. It also comes before us in the earnest statement of the Holy Baptist himself given in Luke i. 16, and the parallel passages in the other Gospels. S. Gregory Nazianzen (Orat. 39 as quoted in the *Catena Aurea* on Luke iii. 3) says: "To speak now of the diversity of baptisms. Moses indeed baptized, but in the water, the cloud, and the sea; but this was done figuratively. John also baptized, not indeed according to the Jewish rite, (for he baptized not only with water,) but also for the remission of sins, yet not altogether spiritually, (for he adds not, *in the Spirit*). Jesus baptizes but with the Spirit, and this is perfect baptism." Maldonatus, arguing against the opinion of some of the reformers, particularly Calvin, who thought that the baptism of John was the same as Christian Baptism, says: "Error sua ipse arguitur novitate. Nam antequam novi isti Evangelistæ [so he is wont to speak of the great authors of the Reformation] venirent, nemini in men-

We may, therefore, regard John the Baptist as commissioned by God to prepare the Jews for the new Dispensation, (whatever that dispensation might have proved to them as a nation but for their unbelief), by calling them to repentance, and promising to them consequent forgiveness, sealed and made over to them individually in Baptism; this rite having been selected (as we may humbly suppose), as having always been significant of purification, and as expressing, that they who submitted to it with right feelings, passed into a state of subjective purity, as repenting of sin; and of objective purity, as forgiven the guilt of their sin. Further, as being the symbol and seal of forgiveness, it was administered to them by another, and him commissioned by Heaven for the pur-

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tem venerat dicere, Joannis et Christi eundem fuisse baptismum. Contra vero non interrogati, non ulla coacti disputatione, omnes quotquot fuere veteres auctores negaverunt. Justinus (*Quæst. ad Orth.* 37), Tertullianus (in libr. *de Baptismo*), Origenes (lib. iii. *in Ep. ad Rom.* c. 6, et tom. vi. in *Joannem*), Optatus (lib. v. *advers. Parm.*), Chrysostomus (*Homil.* x. *in Matth.* et *Homil.* i. *in Marc.*), Auctor Operis imperfecti (*Homil.* iii.), Ambrosius (lib. ii. in Luc. c. iii. *et in Præfat. in Ps.* xxxvii. et *sermon.* 16, *in Ps.* cxviii.), Athanasius (qq. 134), Gregorius Nazianzenus (*in oratione in sancta lumina*), Basilius (*in exhort. ad baptism.* et *in oration. de bapt. Joann.*) Hieronymus (*adv. Lucifer.*), Cyrillus Alexandrinus (lib. ii. *in Joann.* c. 57), Augustinus sexcentis pene locis, quorum illustriores indicabo (lib. ii. *cont. literas Petilian.* c. 37, et lib. iii. c. 56. lib. v. *de baptism. contr. Donat.* c. 9, 10, 15: *in Enchir.* c. 49. Ep. 48.), Gregorius (Hom. 20. *in Evang.*), ut posteriores Bedam, Theophylactum, Œcumenium, Anselmum prætermittam (*Comment. in Matth.* iii. 11). —Some have imagined that John baptized with some form of words, such as *in the name of Christ to come;* this is satisfactorily disposed of by Bishop Taylor, *Life of Christ*, i. ix. 1. This may be noted as another point of difference as compared with Christian baptism.

pose, in order that it might give them an assurance and pledge of the Divine Mercy, such as it would have failed to symbolise, had they been left to perform it upon themselves[29].

Matth. iii. 3. Mark i. 23. Luke iii. 4—7. All the four holy Evangelists refer to Isaiah XL. 3, as fulfilled in John the Baptist; S. John the Apostle further informing us, that the Baptist himself affirmed the same. (John i. 23.) In the passage referred to, the soul of Isaiah appears filled with the conception that the LORD, the God of Israel, is just about to visit and save His people. The august King is already near the wildernesses which so much enclose the Holy Land; and His herald is hastening before him, to summon all to make ready the way for His uninterrupted approach.

This voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare! was John the Baptist, who did no miracle (John x. 41), and was only a *Voice*, proclaiming the approach of God coming to visit Israel in His Son. It is evident that his ministry in the wilderness was regarded by the inspired Apostles, and by himself, as a literal fulfilment of the prophecy, which speaks of the herald as being *in the wilderness*. This is one of the numerous cases in which the external and accidental serves as a sort of finger-post, pointing to the

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[29] It is obvious that similar principles apply for the interpretation of Christian Baptism; this however conferring the additional spiritual purification noticed in a foregoing note (p. 22), combined with a more exalted objective sanctification; for thereby men have not only forgiveness sealed to them, but also adoption whereby they become *the children of God* (Gal. iii. 26, 27, &c.)

fulfilment of a prophecy in something more spiritual and essential[30].

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[30] It may be worth while to compare the quotation as given by the holy Evangelists with the original Hebrew text, and the Septuagint. For this purpose they are all here subjoined. קוֹל קוֹרֵא בַּמִּדְבָּר פַּנּוּ דֶּרֶךְ יְהוָה יַשְּׁרוּ בָעֲרָבָה מְסִלָּה לֵאלֹהֵינוּ: *Septuag.* Φωνὴ βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ. Ἑτοιμάσατε τὴν ὁδὸν Κυρίου, εὐθείας ποιεῖτε [sic] τὰς τρίβους τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν. *The Three Evangelists:* Φωνὴ βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ, Ἑτοιμάσατε τὴν ὁδὸν Κυρίου, εὐθείας ποιεῖτε τὰς τρίβους αὐτοῦ. S. John (i. 23). ἔφη. Ἐγὼ φωνὴ βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ, εὐθύνατε τὴν ὁδὸν Κυρίου, καθὼς εἶπεν Ἡσαΐας ὁ προφήτης. Now several things will strike the observant reader upon this comparison. The Septuagint altogether omits בָּעֲרָבָה, in doing which it is followed by the Evangelists. Further, it translates מְסִלָּה לֵאלֹהֵינוּ by τὰς τρίβους τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν, whereas we should have expected to find rather, τρίβον τῷ Θεῷ ἡμῶν; in which, however, it is likewise followed by the Evangelists, except that they substitute αὐτοῦ for τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν. From these facts, as well as from the agreement in the phraseology in other respects, the natural inference is that they all either mediately or immediately derived their quotation from the Septuagint, and not from the Hebrew. The substitution by them all of αὐτοῦ for τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν is accounted for by our supposing, either that they copied from one another, or, which is more likely, that the Apostles having often occasion to make this reference in preaching, the reference had at length taken this as its fixt form, in which the Evangelists followed them. Further, the variation from the Septuagint agrees with the supposition, that they quoted from memory. S. John's quotation is freer. These observations are borne out likewise by a comparison of the manner in which the verses which follow as quoted in S. Luke both agree with, and differ from, the Hebrew and the Septuagint. When it departs from the Septuagint, in having αἱ τραχεῖαι εἰς ὁδοὺς λείας instead of ἡ τραχεῖα εἰς πεδία, it departs yet further from the Hebrew; but the difference is just such as might be found in a memoriter quotation. In the next verse, it follows the Septuagint in departing widely from the Hebrew, putting τὸ σωτήριον τοῦ Θεοῦ for יַחְדָּו *together*;—which suggests the suspicion that there had been another reading יִשְׁעוֹ, *His Salvation.*

To the quotation made by the other Evangelists, S. Luke (vv. 5, 6) adds the two verses which follow in Isaiah: *Every valley* (or *ravine*) *shall be filled up, and every mountain and hill shall be lowered, and the crooked shall be made a straight way, and the rough roads shall be made into smooth, and all flesh shall see the Salvation of God.* The future tense used in this sentence is not so much predictive as what is called in Hebrew grammar *jussive.* The crier in the wilderness is still speaking, and calling upon the people to do that which, nevertheless, they failed to do. Various commentators have perplexed themselves by attempting to explain in detail the several particulars here enumerated, and differ very much from each other in their results. Origen and Bede take *mountains* as meaning proud men, and *valleys* as meaning the lowly; or again, *mountains* are the Jews, and *valleys* the Gentiles. Bengel explains *valleys*, i. e. hollows and vacuities, as being what is empty of true goodness, as the publicans and soldiers of vv. 12, 14; and the *mountains*, of the swellings of human self-righteousness, or of power, as in the case of Herod. Maldonatus's judgment seems much sounder, who thinks that these figures denote generally unevenness of ground, which is to be made even, in order that a road may be levelled; id est, vitiorum inæqualitas repugnantiaque ad virtutis mediocritatem reducenda, ne quid subeuntem in animos nostros Christum offendat.

The last clause, *and all flesh shall see the salvation of God*, clearly denotes the result in which this preparation was to issue. Commentators are not

agreed as to its exact meaning. Some have referred to Ps. xcviii. 2: *The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen;* and to Isai. lii. 10: *The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.* And they have inferred that the meaning of the prophet is, that the glory of God in redeeming His people should be so conspicuously revealed, that all the world should see and acknowledge it. Another explanation is, that all should have the opportunity offered them of sharing in God's salvation. But there is nothing in the context which leads to the supposition, that *all flesh* is put with reference to the Gentiles, but rather that it means, *all without distinction;* as in Acts ii. 17, *I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh;* i. e. all those whom the salvation concerned; who, in the present case, were the people of Israel[31].

S. Mark adds another quotation from the prophetical books, the last verse of the third chapter of Malachi; a passage which is most strikingly predictive of the Baptist's mission, and, together with the prophecy of Isaiah, so clearly sets forth the preparatory nature of his work. There are, however, two points here which require notice. The first respects the manner in which the holy Evangelist introduces the quotation. In the *Textus Receptus*, indeed, we have, ὡς γέγραπται ἐν τοῖς προφήταις; and Mill reads, ὡς γεγ. ἐν

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[31] Ὄψεται. nulla jam inæqualitate umbram in via retinente, omnibus partibus expositis luci. *Bengel.*

τῷ προφήτῃ; neither of which is attended by any difficulty. But all recent editors prefer ὡς γέγραπται ἐν Ἡσαΐᾳ τῷ προφήτῃ, as being the reading which has, by far the preponderating external evidence in its favour, and as being recommended by the very difficulty which accompanies it, introducing, as it does, words which clearly were not taken from Isaiah. The explanation of the matter seems to be, that the sacred Evangelist, having in view chiefly the prophecy of Isaiah, which was so currently quoted as Isaiah's (compare Matth. iii. 3; Luke iii. 4; John i. 23), and which he adduces as well, also specified the name of that prophet, and inserted, perhaps by an afterthought, the quotation from Malachi between the mention of Isaiah's name and the citation of Isaiah's words. The second point relates to the difference which obtains between his quotation and the words as they stand in the Hebrew and are rendered in the Septuagint. These concur in giving the words as follows: *Behold I send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before* ME[32]. The difference, however, does not affect the essential character of the thought: for, as we have already seen in considering the quotation from Isaiah, in the Messiah, who is represented in S. Mark's quotation as addressed by the Lord in the second person, the Lord Himself was coming to visit His people. It is very remarkable, that S. Matthew (xi. 10.) and S. Luke (vii. 27), re-

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[32] The Hebrew is: הִנְנִי שֹׁלֵחַ מַלְאָכִי וּפִנָּה־דֶרֶךְ לְפָנָי. The Septuagint has: Ἰδοὺ ἐξαποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου καὶ ἐπιβλέψεται ὁδὸν πρὸ προσώπου μου.

cording the citation made of these words by our blessed Lord Himself as fulfilled in S. John Baptist, give them in precisely the same form as they are presented by S. Mark. This concurrence in departing from both the Hebrew and the Septuagint, is to be explained in the same way as the similar phenomena just now noticed in respect to the quotation from Isaiah (p. 25 *note*).

Matth. iii. 5, 6. Mark i. 5. The impression which the appearance of such a preacher, at a time when the Jews were so earnestly expecting the appearance of the Christ their promised Deliverer, produced upon the minds of the population, was immense. The inhabitants of the neighbouring country "went out into the wilderness" in vast multitudes, and were wrought upon by the solemnity and earnestness of his discourses to a most extraordinary degree. The examples which history gives us in other times, as in the middle ages, when the Crusades were preached, may help us to understand, in some degree, the effect now produced by the preaching of the holy Baptist. As in the middle ages, there was an appeal, not indeed, perhaps, made by the Prophet, but so taken by the multitudes, to deep and powerful worldly passions, as well as to the sentiments of conscience and religion. The prospect of the speedy appearance of the great Deliverer of their nation, kept back only by their sins, was calculated to stimulate their minds to an apparent ardour of reformation, far exceeding what would be produced by the genuine impulses of conscience and piety. Accordingly, the population seemed to have suddenly become devout. These great multitudes were all

baptized by John in the Jordan, penitently confessing their sins, and thankfully receiving the seal of Heavenly forgiveness. As our Divine Lord afterwards intimated (Matth. xii. 43), *the unclean spirit was gone out of that wicked generation;* but only, to return with sevenfold greater power.

Matth. iii. 7—9. Luke iii. 7, 8. The Pharisees and Sadducees, for the most part, kept aloof from the popular movement, and regarded the Man of God himself as an enthusiast or demoniac (Luke vii. 30, 33). What response, indeed, was the exhortation to repent of sin likely to find, either with the Pharisee, who prided himself on his holiness and delighted in the admiration of the people, or with the Sadducee, whose views and wishes were bounded by the present state of existence? A considerable number, however, even of them joined with the general impulse. It is evident that they were insincere;—more so than the multitudes around them, inasmuch as *their* insincerity was known to their own hearts. So far from being humble penitents, there rankled in their minds sentiments of antipathy to the Divine message addressed to them, ready afterwards to break out into more overt hostility. This the Prophet, guided by the Holy Spirit, did not fail to detect and expose. Like his great Lord, who *knew what was in man*, (compare Matth. xii. 34; xxiii. 33), he upbraided them with their malignity and hypocrisy, and greeted them with the appellation of *broods of vipers*[33].

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[33] Γέννημα does not, however, necessarily express more than one individual.

It is observable that S. Matthew represents these words as addressed to those Pharisees and Sadducees whom he saw coming forward to offer themselves for baptism, whilst in S. Luke they appear addressed to the multitude at large. The explanation seems to be, that the former Evangelist wrote for Jewish Christians, and was therefore more concerned to bring out distinctly into view such differences as were observable among the Jews within themselves; but S. Luke, writing for Gentile Christians, does not distinguish the persons more especially denounced from other Jews; feeling, perhaps, that the nation generally was chargeable with just the same malignity;—which the history of the New Testament proves to have been the case. (1 Thess. ii. 15, 16).

In the question which follows: *τίς ὑπέδειξεν ὑμῖν φυγεῖν ἀπὸ τῆς μελλούσης ὀργῆς*; there is a little difficulty. Calvin thinks that the Prophet, suspecting the reality of their repentance, asks, with doubt mingled with wonder, whether it could possibly be the case that they were heartily penitent. Maldonatus paraphrases it thus: who has taught you to come hither to seek a means of escaping future wrath, being vipers rather than men[34]? An easier solution is gained by taking *φυγεῖν* as *escape*, not *flee*, as in Matth. xxiii. 33, *ὄφεις γεννήματα ἐχιδνῶν, πῶς φύγητε* (*how are ye to escape*) *ἀπὸ τῆς κρίσεως τῆς γεέννης*; and

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[34] Thus S. Chrysostom. (*Homil.* xi. *in Matth.*) *τί γὰρ γέγονέ, φησιν, ὅτι παῖδες ὄντες ἐκείνων καὶ οὕτω τραφέντες κακῶς, μετενόησαν; πόθεν ἡ τοσαύτη γέγονε μεταβολή; τίς τὸ τραχὺ τῆς γνώμης ὑμῶν κατεμάλαξε; τίς δὲ ὤρθωσε τὸ ἀνίατον;*

by understanding the aorist infinitive, as in Luke ii. 26, ἦν αὐτῷ κεχρηματισμένον—μὴ ἰδεῖν θάνατον, *revealed that he should not see death*. So here: *who hath pointed out to you that ye shall escape the coming wrath*[36]*?* The Pharisees and Sadducees sought baptism as the seal of their forgiveness, while yet, in consequence of their impenitence and malignity, they had no warrant to believe that they would be saved.

The future wrath was, in part, the wrath which was, ere long, to fall upon the Jewish people (Luke xxi. 23) in their national overthrow, intimation of which had been given in the concluding words of the Old Testament, *Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse*, and which S. Paul (1 Thess. ii. 16) recognised as already beginning to manifest itself; but much more, that *wrath to come*, which S. Paul speaks of in the same Epistle (i. 10), of which the other was only the premonitory symbol;—*the condemnation of hell*, denounced by our Divine Lord against these very parties (Matth. xxiii. 33).

And yet, if he thus felt their case to be desperate, S. John Baptist felt that it was so only through their impenitence. If they would come to his baptism as penitents, the door of grace was yet open to them; only they must demonstrate the sincerity of their re-

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[35] Ὑποδείκνυμι is used with reference to the future, as in Sirach xlvi. 20. ὑπέδειξε βασιλεῖ τὴν τελευτὴν αὐτοῦ. It may be observed that φυγεῖν ἀπὸ is a Hebraism, being constructed after the Hebrew בָּרַח מִן: just as ἀπὸ is put in the New Testament after verbs of *fearing* and the like, in imitation of the Hebrew יָרֵא מִן.

pentance by a corresponding life: *Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance*[36].

And think not (Matth.; *begin not*, Luke[37]) *to say within yourselves, We have Abraham for our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.* The besotted confidence which the Jews placed in their descent from Abraham, appears repeatedly in the New Testament; as e. g. in Joh. viii. 33, 39, and in those passages in which S. Paul found it necessary to explain who were the true Israel to whom the blessings of the new economy belong, as Phil. iii. 2, 4, 5; Rom. ii. 29, &c. Wetstein quotes from several rabbinical authors very strong expressions of this confidence. *Sanhedr.* p. 90. 1. *All Israel has a portion in the world to come. Beresh. R.* 18. 7. b. *In the future life Abraham sits by the gates of Hell* (gehenna), *and suffers no circumcised Israelite to go down there.* In dissuading them from this false confidence, John points to the stones which lay around: "God will not endure the wicked; rather than continue His favour to such as you, bound though He may be by His own promise to bless the descendants of Abraham, He will, as He can do,

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[36] Ποιεῖν καρπούς, or καρπόν, is the Hebrew עֲשֵׂה פְּרִי. Comp. Matth. vii. 17, 18. In Acts xxvi. 20, we have the more purely Greek form ἄξια τῆς μετανοίας ἔργα πράσσοντας.

[37] Against that miserably superficial criticism of Kuinoel and others, which would make ἄρξησθε in S. Luke, and δόξητε in S. Matthew, merely pleonastic or periphrastic, we may cite the paraphrase of the keen-sighted Calvin: "Nunc durius a me increpiti, nolite facere quod vestri similes solent, ut scilicet remedium ex vano fallacique prætextu captetis."

quicken these stones even, and adopt *them* into Abraham's family." The inspired preacher, as interpreted in the light of subsequent events, points clearly to the *possible* call of the Gentiles, who, for the Kingdom of God, were as dead as the very stones themselves (Ephes. ii. 1)[38].

Matth. iii. 10. Luke iii. 9. *And now also the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree, therefore, which bringeth not forth good fruit is cut down and cast into the fire*[39]. The meaning of the holy Baptist is clearly this: God's judgements were presently about to burst forth upon that people; without respect to their descent, the Jews would be dealt with, and that too *without any delay*, according to their own merits. There is a similar use of the figure of the axe in Isaiah x. 33, 34. Compare also Matth. xv. 12, 13[40].

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[38] Τινὲς μὲν οὖν φασὶν ὅτι περὶ τῶν ἐθνῶν ταῦτα λέγει, λίθους αὐτοὺς μεταφορικῶς καλῶν· ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ ἑτέραν ἔννοιαν τὸ εἰρημένον φημὶ ἔχειν. ποίαν δὴ ταύτην; μὴ νομίζετέ, φησιν, ὅτι ἐὰν ὑμεῖς ἀπολῆσθε, ἅπαιδα ποιήσετε τὸν πατριάρχην· οὐκ ἔστι ταῦτα, οὐκ ἔστι. τῷ γὰρ Θεῷ δυνατὸν καὶ ἀπὸ λίθων ἀνθρώπους αὐτῷ δοῦναι, καὶ εἰς τὴν συγγένειαν ἐκείνην ἀγαγεῖν. Thus S. Chrysostom (*Homil. xi. in Matth.*), with the tact and discretion so very observable in his commentaries. The expression ἐγεῖραι τέκνα τῷ Ἀβραάμ is likewise Hebraistic. Cp. Gen. xxxviii. 8. וְהָקֵם זֶרַע לְאָחִיךָ׃

[39] In the ἤδη δὲ καὶ of S. Luke, the καὶ follows δὲ without fixing any stress upon the word immediately next to it, but expressing only the introduction of a new thought. This usage is of frequent occurrence in S. Luke. De Wette refers to iii. 12, 14; viii. 36; xvi. 1; xviii. 1, 9, 15; xxiii. 38. In S. Matthew the καὶ is here probably not genuine. It is wanting in B. C. D. M.; and is omitted by Lachmann and Tischendorf as borrowed from S. Luke. On ἐκκόπτεται, Bengel remarks, *Præsens: sine mora.*

[40] Οὐδὲν γὰρ τὸ μέσον λοιπόν, φησιν, ἀλλ' αὐτῇ γὰρ ἐπικεῖται τῇ

Luke iii. 10, 11. On the multitudes asking him, in reply to these earnest exhortations to works suitable to their professions of repentance, what they were required to do, he gives a very different answer from that which is in effect given in the discourses of our Lord, particularly in the Sermon on the Mount. But herein he observes his own characteristic position. In the Sermon on the Mount, for example, the Great Lawgiver of the Kingdom of Heaven has in view an economy, under which the standard of required excellence was to be raised above that of the previous dispensation, in proportion as the aids to obedience were to be multiplied (cf. Rom. viii. 1—4). But the Baptist stood on lower ground; and in preparing men for the further displays of God's mercy, he was satisfied with enforcing upon them the principles of morality;—justice, in fulfilling the duties of their several callings, and mercy. Compare the rules of discipline preparatory to a higher manifestation of the favour of heaven, given in Isai. LVIII. 5—8. Of course, the answer of S. John, *Let him that hath two coats share them with him that hath none, and let him that hath food do likewise*, is to be taken in the same way as many of the precepts of our Blessed Lord; it is a general rule, given in the form of one particular instance, but to be applied to all analogous cases.

ῥίζῃ· καὶ οὐκ εἶπε, τοῖς κλάδοις, οὐδὲ τοῖς καρποῖς, ἀλλὰ τῇ ῥίζῃ, δεικνὺς αὐτοὺς εἰ ῥαθυμήσαιεν ἀνίατα πεισομένους δεινά, καὶ οὐδὲ ἐλπίδα ἔξοντας θεραπείας. οὐδὲ γὰρ δοῦλός ἐστιν ὁ παραγενόμενος ὡς οἱ πρότερον, ἀλλ' αὐτὸς ὁ τῶν ὅλων δεσπότης, σφόδραν ἐπάγων τὴν τιμωρίαν καὶ ἐνατωτάτην. Chrys. ut supra.

Luke iii. 12, 13. S. Luke here particularises the baptism of publicans as a feature deserving of especial notice; and not without evident reason. In addition to the odium, which, as in any conquered country, would naturally attach to those among the Jews who discharged the lower offices in the collection of the taxes imposed by the Romans—the tax-gatherer being always unwelcome, and in this case especially hated, as joining with aliens in the oppression of his country—there mingled with civil and political hatred feelings of religious contempt also. Hence, in Matth. xviii. 17, *Let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.* According to the Rabbins[41], a religious man who became a publican was to be driven out of religious society. In consequence, only Jews of no character would engage in such a calling; and it might be expected that there would be found amongst them very much dishonesty and oppression; so that we need not wonder that *publicans* are so often classed with *sinners.*

Now it is a remarkable feature in the holy Baptist's ministry, that with all the austerity which belonged to his character, he was yet willing to receive and baptize these outcasts of the people,—the Pariahs of Judaism. His doing so was an indication of the presence with him of the same Divine Spirit which afterwards manifested itself in all its glory in the adorable Redeemer Himself. In both cases, the Divine stood in just the same relation of mutual antipathy

[41] Lightfoot, *Hor. Hebr. et Talm.* in Matth. xviii. 17. See Winer, *Realwört.* Art. *Zöllner.* Kitto's *Cyclop.* Art. *Publican.*

with the unreal sanctity and real hard-heartedness of Pharisaism. Hence they who rejected the Lord rejected also His Forerunner. (Luke vii. 29, 30; xx. 5, 6[42]).

When the penitent Publicans (for in their case, as in that of other *sinners*, there appears to have been much reality in their profession of repentance, Matth xi. 12. Luke vii. 29. xxi. 32), asked in what way they should prove their sincerity, he referred to the duties of their own particular calling; requiring that in these they should adhere to the principles of equity: *Exact no more than is appointed you*[43]. In the same spirit he exhorts the soldiers. Bengel finely observes: Fructus intimæ pœnitentiæ in extimas vitæ partes exit, neque speciosis sed civilibus et tamen bonis operibus constat.

Luke iii. 14. *The soldiers also asked him, And what shall we do?* Επηρώτων αὐτὸν καὶ στρατευόμενοι. As S. Luke often uses the word στρατιῶται, there is something remarkable in the use of the participle in the present instance. It means: *certain who were serving in the army*[44]. And this form of expression

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[42] This feature in S. John Baptist's ministry is brought to light only by S. Luke; and indeed generally it is a fact which can hardly have been accidental, that in S. Matthew we find very much less concerning the position taken by our Lord towards Publicans and other Sinners of the Jews, than we do in S. Luke. Was the reason this, That these outcasts approximated so nearly in their supposed theocratical position to the heathen, for whom S. Luke wrote?

[43] Μηδὲν παρὰ τὸ διατεταγμένον ὑμῖν πράσσετε. Παρὰ after a comparative as in Hebrews i. 4, διαφορώτερον παρ' αὐτούς; ii. 7, 9; iii. 3, Διατεταγμένον ὑμῖν, sc. πράσσειν.

[44] For the verb, compare 1 Cor. ix. 7; 2 Tim. ii. 4.

was probably chosen from the feeling that it was not generally thought becoming in a Jew, whether regarded as a patriot or as a member of a theocratic state, to serve in the army under the heathen Romans. Those who did so lent themselves, like the Publicans, to the oppressors of their country, and were, most likely, men of bad moral character as well as of mean estimation. And this is probably the reason why S. Luke discriminates these, together with the Publicans, alone out of the multitudes whom the holy Prophet was baptizing. The Evangelist means hereby to illustrate the spirit of the Baptist's ministry, and of the Dispensation, the approach of which he was sent to proclaim.—Of course, that ministry contemplated none but Jews; so that Roman or other heathen soldiers could not have been those of whom S. Luke is here speaking.

S. John tells them not to employ their power as carrying arms, for purposes of *extortion* and *oppression*, and to *be content with their wages*;—an answer, as has been already observed, given in the same spirit as that which dictated his reply to the Publicans[45].

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[45] Μηδένα διασείσητε μηδὲ συκοφαντήσητε, καὶ ἀρκεῖσθε τοῖς ὀψωνίοις ὑμῶν. Διασείειν, properly *to shake thoroughly*, hence *to frighten*, and then like *concutere* in Latin, *to extort money by intimidation*. 3 Macc. vii. 21. ὑπὸ μηδενὸς διασεισθέντες τῶν ὑπαρχόντων, *robbed of their property*. So ἐπανασείειν in Josephus, Antiq. xix. 1. 16. The origin of the συκοφάντης in the evasion of the custom-laws of Attica is well known. The verb συκοφαντεῖν τινά, *to play the συκοφάντης with any one*, would properly mean *to injure him by vexatious informations*, or, secondarily, *by an oppressive or unfair use of the law*; and so it seems to be used by S. Luke in xix. 8, εἴ τινός τι ἐσυκοφάντησα. Thus also Levit. xix. 11, οὐ κλέψετε, οὐ

Luke iii. 15, 16, 17, with Matth. iii. 11, 12. Mark i. 7, 8. S. Luke tells us that the occasion of the Prophet's declaration of the inferiority of his baptism to that of the Christ, was that *all the people were in expectation*, (waiting to see what would next ensue,) and *were debating in their own minds, whether perhaps he was not himself the Christ*[46]. Of the first three Evangelists, S. Luke alone mentions this doubt on the part of the multitude; but the account given by S. John the Evangelist, of the questions put to

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ψεύσεσθε, οὐδὲ συκοφαντήσει (Hebrew תְּשַׁשְּׁקוּ) ἕκαστος τὸν πλησίον. But in Hellenistic Greek it appears often to denote simply oppression. Thus Job xxxv. 9; Ps. cxix. 122; μὴ συκοφαντησάτωσάν με ὑπερήφανοι: Prov. xiv. 31; xxii. 16, &c. So συκοφάντης is put for עָשׁק Ps. lxxii. 4, and συκοφαντία for עֹשֶׁק Ps. cxix. 134. This is most probably the sense here. Ὀψώνιον is whatever is *bought*, as ὄψον, i. e. to eat as a relish with bread;—olives, caviare, salt-fish were ὀψώνια, *opsonia*. In later Greek it oftens means *wages*, as Rom. vi. 23; in which sense it was adopted by the Rabbins, אופסוניות (Lightfoot in h. loc.) The only explanation, so far as I can discover, of this sense of the word is to be sought in the fact, that the Roman soldier was provided with corn by the state, but had to provide for himself whatever he chose to eat with his bread; hence the pay in money which he received, and which in part he applied to this purpose, came to be called ὀψώνια.

[46] Μήποτε αὐτὸς εἴη ὁ Χριστός. Μὴ as an interrogative particle, like *num* in Latin, expects a negative answer, as in Matth. vii. 9, μὴ λίθον ἐπιδώσει; 1 Cor. i. 13; Luke v. 34, and very often. Ποτὲ, *ever*, adds to μὴ a tone of surprise, q. d. *can it ever*, i. e. *in any way, be true?* Sometimes then μήποτε may mean thus: *can it be so? hardly! yet one wonders whether it is not?* i. e. it may be used, when we scarcely venture to assume a conclusion, which yet, without daring to say so, we are almost disposed to assume. Thus in a *direct* question in John vii. 26, μήποτε ἀληθῶς ἔγνωσαν οἱ ἄρχοντες ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ Χριστός;

the holy Baptist by the deputation from Jerusalem, leads to the same inference. Indeed, it was this uncertainty on the part of the people which led John to declare his own inferiority with so much emphasis. Appearing suddenly as he did with a Divine Commission, and announcing the Kingdom of Heaven as at hand, it is by no means surprising that the multitude should have eagerly caught at the surmise, that he might be the Christ Himself, seen as yet in the earliest form of His manifestation. In just the same way they afterwards flocked after several false Christs, who went out into the wilderness there to gather followers beyond the immediate reach of the Roman police. (Cf. Matth. xxiv. 25).

To do away with this false conception, which, so far as it went, would have counteracted the purpose of his mission, the Baptist declared in the most public and solemn manner, (ἀπεκρίνατο ἅπασι λέγων, Luke), *I indeed baptize with water unto repentance; but He is coming after me, Who is mightier than I, Whose shoe-latchet I am not worthy to unloose; He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with Fire.*

I indeed baptize you with water[47]. The low esti-

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[47] S. Matthew has: Ἐγὼ μὲν βαπτίζω ὑμᾶς ἐν ὕδατι εἰς μετάνοιαν; S. Mark: Ἐγὼ μὲν ἐβάπτισα ὑμᾶς ἐν ὕδατι;—both with ἐν. S. Luke, on the other hand, both here and in Acts i. 5, and xi. 16, omits the preposition, having simply ὕδατι; and yet in each of these three passages he adds the preposition with Πνεύματι Ἁγίῳ. The reason appears to be, that in the former case (ὕδατι) the feebleness of the element employed is meant to be indicated alone; whereas in the latter, not only is the superior potency of the element regarded, but also the largeness of its application: *I baptize you with water; He shall baptize in the Holy Ghost and in Fire.*

mate which the Prophet here assigns to his own Baptism, is not to be explained, as some, e. g. Calvin, have sought to explain it, by supposing that he compares himself as a mere instrument with the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is represented as Himself doing whatever is done through the instrumentality of inferior ministers; for the future, *shall baptize*, clearly points to an operation of Christ's power, which had not yet been displayed. (Compare John vii. 39. Acts i. 5.) Neither does he hereby teach us that there was no virtue in his Baptism, or that it conferred no grace; for we have seen, as I humbly think, that it sealed the forgiveness of sins to every true penitent that underwent it. But it was not endued with the power of renewing the soul, or of sealing to it such grace as should cleanse and spiritualise. It was in that respect a Baptism of water only, *unto repentance*, as S. Matthew adds: it was not a *regeneration* of water *and of the Spirit*, such as our Lord intimated to Nicodemus, was the character of His Baptism. (John iii. 5.) Its actual purifying power therefore reached no further than the body;—John baptized with water only.

He that is mightier than I cometh after me. There is a tone of awe in the holy Baptist's words, as of one who had been enlightened by the Divine Spirit to see and feel the stupendous majesty of the Lord he came to announce. Non statim dicit: *Messias post me venit;* sed paraphrasi rem occultius et tamen augustius exprimit. *Bengel.* So august was that Mightier One, and so unworthy in comparison did he feel himself, that he declares himself unfit even

to undo the fastenings of His sandals, or, as we read in S. Matthew, to carry His sandals[48].

He shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost. The notion of purification is so essential to the word βαπτίζω as employed in the holy Scriptures, that we cannot be mistaken in regarding this as one main ingredient in the meaning of the words now before us.

A second prominent feature, closely connected with the former, is the notion of initiation;—a notion which is brought before our view by the place which the rite of Baptism held in the preparatory Economy (if the expression may be allowed) of John the Baptist, and which it holds in the present Christian Economy; and also by the manner in which the term is employed in the New Testament; e. g. in Rom. vi. 3, 4. 1 Cor. x. 2. Gal. iii. 27. Hence, S. Paul says (1 Cor. xii. 13), *by one Spirit we have all been baptized into one body.* This sense of initiation, as well as of large effusion, is clearly discernible in the figurative use of the term in Matth. xx. 22, and Luke xii. 50.

By using this expression, therefore, the holy Prophet points out to our attention, not only the purify-

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[48] Οὗ—τὸν ἱμάντα τῶν ὑποδημάτων αὐτοῦ. So in each of the first three Gospels. The addition of αὐτοῦ with οὗ is a Hebraism formed after the model of אֲשֶׁר לוֹ. Thus Mark vii. 25; Rev. vii. 2, οἷς ἐδόθη αὐτοῖς ἀδικῆσαι τὴν γῆν. Winer (*Grammatik des N. T. Sprachidioms*, p. 141) adds as analogous constructions Mark xiii. 19, οἵα—τοιαύτη; Rev. xii. 6, 14, ὅπου...ἐκεῖ. It is very common in the Septuagint. Ὑποδήματα, any kind of shoes, is here *sandals*. See Wetstein on Matth. iii. 11, for illustrations of the obvious expression of humiliation which we here find.

ing power to be exerted upon men by the Mightier One Who was coming, but also the effect which that purification should work in introducing men into a new relation;—in connecting them with that heavenly and spiritual Body of which Christ was to be Himself the Head. He felt that *he* could *baptize only unto repentance; Christ* would baptize unto that glorious state of Sonship and Union with the Blessed Trinity, in which was to be realized the Kingdom of Heaven amongst men.

This Baptism was first wrought on the day of Pentecost, Acts i. 5: *Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.* Since that time, it normally accompanies and gives its proper character to what S. Paul (Titus iii. 5) has therefore styled *the bath of regeneration.*

Lastly, as has been already indicated, the form of the expression (*βαπτίσει ἐν Πνεύματι Ἁγ.*) points to the largeness of the Divine Effusion here spoken of. By using *ἐν, in*, the words as recorded by the sacred Evangelists recal the technical sense of the word *βαπτίζω* back to its primary sense of *immerse.* Conformably with this notion of the largeness of the Gift, our Blessed Lord speaks of *rivers* of water as flowing forth from Its presence within the soul (John vii. 38); whilst S. Paul (Titus iii. 6) acknowledges with humble gratitude, that God *had poured out* upon us the Holy Ghost *richly*[49].

And with fire. This has been most generally

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[49] Καὶ αὐτῇ τῇ μεταφορᾷ τῆς λέξεως τὸ δαψιλὲς τῆς χάριτος ἐμφαίνων. Chrysost, *Homil. xi. in Matth.*

explained as added to qualify and illustrate the words, *the Holy Ghost;* and as pointing, either to the intense power of the Holy Spirit in purifying the soul; (as Calvin says, Quia sordes nostras non aliter purgat quam aurum igni excoquitur[50]); or to the energy which His Sacred Influence gives to holy zeal and love; or, which is the more common explanation both in ancient and modern commentators, to that fiery appearance (γλῶσσαι ὡσεὶ πυρός), which accompanied the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The reference to Isaiah iv. 4. Malachi iii. 2, 3, by which the first explanation is often supported, fails in one important point. In those passages there is a reference distinctly made to processes of purification in which fire is employed; as in Malachi by the mention of the *refiner.* This addition makes this application of the term *fire* in them easy and natural: but as reference to any such process of purification is here wanting, the introduction of the idea in the interpretation of the expression, appears in some degree forced and unnatural[51]. The second

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[50] So S. Chrysostom: Τῇ ἐπεξηγήσει τοῦ πυρὸς πάλιν τὸ σφοδρὸν καὶ ἀκάθεκτον τῆς χάριτος ἐνδεικνύμενος.

[51] I should not, however, be disposed to reject this interpretation, if none more probable suggested itself; for it may be urged on its behalf, that the very harshness of the introduction of the term *fire* in such a relation, being put in contrast with the superficial purification by water, agrees with the great earnestness with which the Baptist depreciates his own Baptism in the comparison. For extreme earnestness combined with austerity is apt to produce a certain harshness, and, if I may so speak, precipitancy, in the style of expression. Tertullian is a striking example.

view is not likely to be adopted by many. To the third, it may be objected, that the *appearance* of fire (for it seems to have been only an appearance—γλῶσσαι ὡσεὶ πυρός), was so singular and isolated a fact, that it seems very unlikely that the Holy Spirit which spoke in the Baptist, and was now leading him to describe the agency of the Christ in its extended manifestation, should have mingled with so general a description of His work, a reference to a circumstance so solitary and so unessential.

A comparison of the four Evangelists (for here we have the testimony of the Apostle John as well), in the passages in which they severally quote this declaration of the Prophet, brings to light a circumstance which appears to point out the way to the true explanation of its meaning.

In S. Mark (i. 8) and S. John (i. 33), the words, *and with fire*, are wanting; and with them are also wanting the words, which both in S. Matthew (iii. 12) and in S. Luke (iii. 17) who have, *and with fire*, follow immediately after. The same observation applies to Acts i. 5. This naturally leads us to look to the verse which follows in S. Matthew and in S. Luke, as likely to furnish us with the true interpretation of these words which in these Gospels precede it. Now this verse states, that a discrimination was to be exercised upon the substances lying on the threshing-floor, according to which the true Israelites, *the wheat*, were to be gathered into the garner, and the false, *the chaff*, were to be burnt up with unquenchable fire. And, it may further be observed, this discrimination is called a *thorough cleansing of the floor*. Now *the*

gathering the wheat into the garner clearly corresponds to the *Baptism with the Holy Spirit.* It is difficult, then, not to believe that the *burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire* corresponds to the *Baptism with fire* and this explains it.

Taking it, however, thus, we are not to understand the *Baptism with fire* as describing the sufferings of Hell; for Baptism always has a reference to salvation[52]. Neither is there any support afforded here to the doctrine of purgatory, to something like which, seemingly, Origen (sometimes, as is universally allowed, so eccentric in his views) refers the passage[53], followed herein by S. Hilary (likewise not always orthodox) and by S. Jerome. Rather we must understand the words as describing the purifying change about to be effected in God's Israel—*the thorough cleansing of the floor*—whereby the Christ, the Lord of Israel, would transform its character, either by the renewing grace of the Holy Spirit on such as would obey Him, or by the consuming fires of His wrath upon such as refused His grace. In the latter case, the term *baptize* relates, not to those in particular who would perish under His anger, but rather to the whole Israel of which they formed a part, but which

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[52] Olshausen.

[53] Διὰ τοῦτο ὁ Ἰησοῦς βαπτίζει, τάχα νῦν εὑρίσκω τὸν λόγον, ἐν Πνεύματι Ἁγίῳ καὶ πυρί· ἀλλὰ τὸν μὲν ἅγιον ἐν τῷ Πνεύματι Ἁγίῳ, τὸν δὲ μετὰ τὸ πιστεῦσαι, μετὰ τὸ ἀξιωθῆναι Ἁγίου Πνεύματος, πάλιν ἡμαρτηκότα, λούει ἐν πυρί, ὡς μὴ τὸν αὐτὸν εἶναι βαπτιζόμενον ὑπὸ Ἰησοῦ ἐν Πνεύματι Ἁγίῳ καὶ πυρί. Origen. *Homil.* ii. *in Jeremiam* (ii. 21, 22). So also *Homil.* xxiv. *in Lucam* in S. Jerome's translation. Cf. Hilar. and Hieron. *Comment. in Matth.*

was thus to be purified by fire as well as by the Holy Spirit. If we take the words thus, the reference made by many to Isaiah iv. 4 (*the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning*), and Malachi iii. 1, 2, is perfectly apposite, and greatly illustrates their meaning. Compare also Malachi iv. 1, 2.

Whose winnowing shovel is in His Hand. "The awful discrimination is now very near; already has He taken up the shovel!"—For the πτυόν was the shovel with which the threshed corn was thrown up into the draught of air to winnow it[54].

The threshingfloor (or *the threshed wheat*) is here said to belong to the Christ—to be *His*. So we read in Joh. i. 11, *He came unto His own;* and Hebr. iii. 6, *Christ as a Son over His own house.*

Luke iii. 18. *With many other exhortations he preached the gospel unto the people.* The references made by the holy Prophet to the expiatory work of our Lord, which are recorded only by S. John, were perhaps not made until after His manifestation at His Baptism, which, we may readily suppose, was accompanied and followed by additional and more precise disclosures to the mind of the Baptist, respecting the nature of His work, than he had previously received.

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[54] It is possible to understand αὐτοῦ as added Hebraistically (see above p. 42), and as showing merely that χειρὶ governs οὗ: *in whose hand is the shovel.* Above I have followed the Authorised Version in reading διακαθαριεῖ τὴν ἅλωνα; yet as ἅλων, properly no doubt *threshingfloor*, is repeatedly used in the Septuagint for *threshed corn*, in translation of גֶּרֶן, or corn ready to be threshed, ripe corn, (as in Exod. xxii. 6; Judg. xv. 8; Job xxxix. 12), it would perhaps be more correct to understand it so here.

As therefore of a later date in the ministry of John than the Baptism of our Lord, with which the first three Evangelists close their account of the Baptist, they give their readers no intimation of them. It would carry us too far from the field of view to which the present Essay is limited—which is that afforded us by the first three Gospels—to enter at length into the discussion of those most interesting references. We must satisfy ourselves at present with the observation, that the account above given of the subjects of the Prophet's teaching, is stated by S. Luke to be very incomplete; and that, along with that general exhortation to repentance, and those general promises of coming blessings which have been here considered, there was a closer description given by him (perhaps, however, confined to an inner circle of disciples) of the glory of the Redeemer's Person, and of the expiatory nature of His work. Yet it does not appear to have been into such more properly Christian doctrine that the people were summoned to be baptized. The qualifications for, and the consequences of, his Baptism, we must suppose to have been adequately stated by those sacred Historians who wrote before S. John. This last Apostle only added a few integrating touches to the representation, without affecting its general character. The *Gospel*, which S. John Baptist preached, was the declaration of the glad tidings of the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven. The same term is used of our Lord's own teaching, (Luke xx. 1), the tenor of which, as has been already intimated, was, in this respect, the same as that of the Forerunner. Compare Matth. iv. 17, 23.

S. Luke uses the imperfect tense (εὐηγγελίζετο), expressing, it should seem, the continuance of John's ministry up to the time when it was interrupted by Herod Antipas shutting him up in prison. We learn, however, from S. John, that he had begun to *decrease* before Herod ventured upon this act of tyranny (Joh. iii. 26, 30); probably, that wicked prince would hardly have ventured to seize him whilst in the height of his popularity.

Chapter II.

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD JESUS.

Matt. iii. 13—17. Mark i. 9—11. Luke iii. 21, 22.

THE first question which naturally presents itself for consideration in reference to this solemn and most mysterious subject, is this—Why did it seem good to our adorable Lord to submit to this rite? We might have thought beforehand that, as He was free from sin, both original and actual, the baptism of repentance was, in His case, wholly unsuitable. Yet we see that He did not thus judge. On the contrary, He declared to John the Baptist, when he hesitated to perform the rite upon His sacred Person, that it was *becoming* and *fit* (πρέπον) on His part, and a *fulfilment of righteousness*. Matth. iii. 15[1]. It was, further, a part of the Divine plan that Jesus should come to that baptism, and that He should, in undergoing it, *be made manifest to Israel*. Joh. iii. 31, 33.

It is not sufficient to answer, that He did it for the sake of example. Unless it was fitting in His own case, His submitting to it would be no example for those in whose cases it was fitting. There must be a

[1] Δικαιοσύνη here is not exactly equivalent to τὸ δίκαιον, as Olshausen thought, but is rather the *practice* of what is right. But at all events, our Lord's using the term in the way He did showed that He regarded it as δίκαιον that He should be baptized, and therefore πρέπον that both He Himself and John should concur in bringing about this result.

similarity of circumstances to constitute any action exemplary.

Still less is it satisfactory to say, that He submitted to this rite merely in order that He might be marked out by the accompanying circumstances as the Christ. This end might have been attained without His being baptized.

In endeavouring, with a full consciousness of our inability to fathom the depths of the Divine Councils, to attain some solution of this difficulty, so far as we can presume to investigate the subject, our minds will revert to the rite of circumcision, to which the Divine Jesus had been subjected when an infant. That was indeed, in some respects, different, particularly as being the rite of introduction into a national covenant. Yet it presents features of resemblance which seem to suggest a probable answer to our present enquiry.

The Baptism of John was, among other things, significant, as we have seen, of initiation into an economy (so to speak) preparatory to that of the kingdom of God[2]. It was fitting, therefore, (we may reverently suppose), that the Divine Jesus should enter this preparatory economy as well as others; since, though ministering therein as the Christ, He yet was to minister in a condition preparatory to that in which He was afterwards as the *exalted Prince and Saviour* to reign. At the same time it was so ordered, that while thus entering that economy with

[2] In Neander's language: "das allgemeine Inaugurations-symbol für die anbrechende messianische Zeit."—*Leben Jesu*, p. 75.

others, He should enter it in a manner which sufficiently marked His own relation both to the economy itself and also to other men[3].

Neither was baptism, regarded as the symbol of purification, altogether irrelevant, even in the case of the holy Jesus. For though, in the case of men in general, it expressed the cleansing away of *sin*[4], in which respect it was inapplicable to Him, being wholly without sin, yet, viewed in relation to His work, it had its propriety. Our blessed Lord had hitherto passed His Life amidst secular engagements; (for, from the question of the Nazarenes, recorded Mark vi. 3, *Is not this the carpenter?* it is clear that He had Himself carried on the business of His reputed father). He had thus, and in other ways as a fellow-inhabitant of the town, been mingled with the people of Nazareth in the various engagements of social life—labouring, and selling and buying, and taking part in the offices and intercourse of neighbourhood. In short, He had been completely assimilated to His sinful brethren (except in their sins),—associated and blended with them. But now He was about to assume the

[3] Nearly to this effect is the following observation of Lightfoot (*Horæ Hebr. &c. in Matth.* iii. 15): "When by the institution of Christ those that entered into the profession of the Gospel were to be introduced by Baptism, it was just, yea necessary, that Christ, being to enter into the same profession and to preach it too, should be admitted by Baptism." He does not, however, in this statement discriminate sufficiently between the Baptism of John and that of the Christian Church.

[4] And thus His submitting to it, and so "performing," as Bishop Taylor says, "the sacrament of sinners," was another instance of His coming ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας.

Divine functions of the Lord's Christ; if we may venture thus to apply the language which S. Paul has used in reference to His actual death, He was *to die unto sin, that He might live unto God* (Rom. vi. 10). It therefore seems fitting that such a transition should be accompanied by His passing through a rite which so graphically expressed purification; in which, in His instance, it was set forth, that He washed himself clean of worldly associations, and came forth pure and entire as the Christ of God.

Thus, under the Law, the high priest, though he might be under no peculiar defilement, was yet required to wash his flesh in water before he put on those *holy garments* wherewith he was to enter behind the veil (Levit. xvi. 4).

Neither, again, are we to overlook the relation which His baptism bears to the baptism of His Church;—a relation which is expressed in that ancient prayer retained in the Baptismal offices of the English Church, in these words: *Almighty and everlasting God...who by the Baptism of thy well-beloved Son, in the river Jordan, didst sanctify Water to the mystical washing away of sin.* The whole life of our Lord and its several steps were in truth sacramental; giving a grace and consecration to all that appertains to our human existence, and filling it all with the presence of His love and holiness[5].

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[5] S. Ambrose (*Expositio Evang. sec. Luc.* in loc.) remarks: Baptizatus est ergo Dominus, non mundari volens, sed mundare aquas; ut ablutæ per carnem Christi quæ peccatum non cognovit baptismatis jus haberent. Calvin (*Comment.*): Specialis ratio adducta fuit

Such, then, we may humbly suppose, were the reasons which made it suitable that the Son of God should be baptized as well as sinful men. Let us now consider the details of the transaction.

It is intimated, by the manner in which S. Luke (iii. 21) introduces the brief account which he gives of it, that there was no distinction made by its outward circumstances between the baptism of Christ and that of men in general. Such seems to be the meaning of his words: *And it came to pass, when all the people were baptized, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, heaven was opened*[6]. The circumstances which distinguished this from the baptism

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fuit quod communem nobiscum baptismum susceperit, ut certius sibi persuaderent fideles in ejus corpus sese inseri, et consepeliri cum eo baptismo ut in vitæ novitatem resurgant. Ista enim generalis suscipiendi baptismi ratio fuit Christo, ut plenam obedientiam præstaret Patri; specialis autem ut baptismum consecraret in suo ipsius corpore, ut nobis communis cum eo esset. Bengel (*Gnomon*): Non sibi baptizatus est Christus. Et Spiritum sanctum accepit, quo nos baptizaret. Joh. i. 33. See also the second Introduction to the 3rd Chapter of S. Matthew in Otto von Gerlach's very useful edition of the German New Testament (Berlin. 1840).

[6] Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν τῷ βαπτισθῆναι ἅπαντα τὸν λαόν, καὶ Ἰησοῦ βαπτισθέντος καὶ προσευχομένου, ἀνεῳχθῆναι τὸν οὐρανόν. The aorist tense of βαπτισθῆναι does not express that the baptism of all the people preceded that of our Lord and was all over before He came, but simply, that at the same time that all the people were baptized, He was baptized likewise;—i. e. there was no distinction made in point of time between His baptism and theirs. Hence S. Luke adds ἅπαντα. If he had meant, *after they were all baptized*, we might have expected him rather to say ἐπεὶ—ἐβαπτίσθη. The present tense βαπτίζεσθαι, again, would have fixed the reader's attention more on the continuance of their baptism while His took place; *whilst all the people were being baptized.*

of the multitudes who flocked into the wilderness, were those which occurred after the ascent of our Lord from the water.

It is plainly indicated by all the three Evangelists, that the Holy Spirit descended upon the blessed Jesus not till *after* His baptism. And in this we may likewise discern a fitness and propriety. The first part of the act of baptism, the dipping down beneath the stream, represents the negative,—the putting aside of the *old man* (Rom. vi. 4); in the second part, the rising up from the water, was exhibited the positive,—the coming forth of the *new man*. And it was upon the new man, the Jesus now dead to His former relations and connexions with the world, that the Holy Spirit was to descend, anointing Him to be the Christ[7].

It is particularly stated by S. Matthew (iii. 16) and S. Mark (i. 9, 10), that *immediately* after He had been baptized, He went up from the water. Upon being immersed by the holy Prophet, our Lord, knowing what was to ensue, did not continue for any time in the water as others probably did[8], but immediately

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[7] Olshausen, *Commentar*, p. 173.

[8] Quod Euthymius scribit ideo Evangelistam dixisse Christum ab aqua ascendisse, ut, inter Christum Dominum et alios quid interesset, significaret: solitum quippe fuisse Joannem cæteros in Jordane collo tenus immersos manu capiti imposita detinere, donec peccata sua confiterentur; Christum vero, quia peccatum quod confiteretur non habebat statim ascendisse; ab eo creditum ac dictum miror. *Maldonatus.* This interpretation of Euthymius is certainly hypothetical; yet some may perhaps be at a loss to see why Maldonatus should have regarded it as so very strange. Maldonatus's own explanation, at any rate, of a *trajection* of the adverb εὐθὺς in S. Matthew,

ascended the banks of the river, and, no doubt, threw Himself into the attitude of prayer (for S. Luke particularly adds that He was *praying*), thus to receive the Divine gift with that reverence and humility, which as a Man, and even as Son, He doubtless felt to be befitting[9].

And, behold! the heavens were opened (ἀνεῴχθησαν) *unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending.* Thus S. Matthew. S. Mark records thus: *He saw the heavens rending asunder* (σχιζομένους), *and the Spirit descending.* To these accounts we must add that given us by the Apostle John (i. 32—34): *And John testified, saying, I have seen the Spirit descending;...and I knew him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water,* He *said unto me, On whomsoever thou seest the Spirit descending, He it is that baptizeth with the Holy Spirit; and I have seen and have given my testimony, that this is the Son of God.* From these accounts we learn, *first*, that the Lord Jesus saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit descending; for, in the text of S. Mark, we cannot possibly understand the subject of the verb *saw* as other than Jesus. Its being specified that He saw it, leads us to the inference that it was not seen by the

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Matthew, which he thinks properly belongs to ἀνεῴχθησαν, is not favoured by the Greek text of S. Mark, and is wholly irreconcileable with that of the former Evangelist.

[9] Credendum est eum, simul atque in terram evasit, sese in genua provolvisse, ut reverenter Patris testimonium exciperet. Nam et filii bene instituti, dum ipsos parentes alloquuntur, caput aperiunt. *Maldonatus.*—Sæpe preces Jesu commemoravit Lucas, in rebus maximis, vi. 12; ix. 18, 29; xxii. 32, 41; xxiii. 46. *Bengel.*

by-standers generally. Next, we learn from the Apostle John, that the Baptist himself saw the same vision; and, indeed, that his seeing it had been appointed to him beforehand, as the sign by which he should distinguish the Christ from other men; for previously to this, he did not know Him.

But how are we to reconcile this last particular—that S. John Baptist did not previously know the Christ—with the account of S. Matthew? For going back to an earlier part of S. Matthew's narrative, to his relation of that which occurred immediately *before* the baptism of Jesus, we learn that the prophet recognised his Lord immediately on His offering Himself for baptism[10]. The difficulty remains the same, whether we understand S. John Baptist's affirming that *he did not know Him*, as meaning personal knowledge of Him as Jesus of Nazareth merely, or as meaning knowledge of His being the Christ.

We shall perhaps be better able to meet this difficulty, as well as to understand the nature of the mysterious transaction generally, after considering what has occurred on other similar occasions of supernatural manifestation.

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[10] Ex sympathia illa qua in utero commotus fuerat, et ex aspectu ejus gratiosissima, says Bengel. The reference to the circumstance narrated by S. Luke in his account of the Virgin's visit to Elizabeth, is certainly very striking. But what was the *sympathy* in either case but the stirring within of the Prophetic Spirit? Thus Bishop Taylor (*Life of Christ*, I. ix. 1): "The Baptist had never seen His face. But immediately the Holy Ghost inspired S. John with a discerning and knowing spirit, and at His first arrival he knew Him, and did Him worship." So Maldonatus.

When the angels were encamped round about Elijah, his servant was unable to discern them till, upon the prophet's prayer, *God opened his eyes* (2 Kings vi. 17). When S. Stephen *saw the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God* (Acts vii. 56), it is clear that the tumultuous crowd about him did not see what he did, even after he had described what he saw; for such a vision must at once have overawed and subdued their utmost rage. In the case of S. Paul's conversion, the people who accompanied him, though, it is true, they saw a light and heard sounds, yet neither saw the person of the Redeemer, nor distinguished His words (Acts viii. 7; xxii. 9; xxvi. 13, 14)[11]. In Gethsemane, the angel who came to *strengthen* our most blessed Redeemer, is said by S. Luke, who alone mentions the circumstance, to have *appeared unto him* (ὤφθη αὐτῷ, xxii. 43). What is more closely analogous to the case

[11] The reader will find matter of considerable interest in Tholuck's discussion, in his *Commentar zum Evangelio Johannis*, on John xii. 28, of the relation of the φωνὴ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, spoken of by the holy Evangelist in that passage, to the בת קול, *daughter of a voice*, of the Rabbins (on which consult Lightfoot, *Hor. Heb.*, &c. in h. loe). In the case of the φωνὴ then uttered, as well as at the conversion of S. Paul, Tholuck, following S. Theodore of Mopsuestia on John i. 32 and S. Chrysostom, considers a subjective condition necessary in the hearer's spirit in order to a right apprehension of the objective phenomenon, and he thinks that this is proved by the twenty-ninth verse of the same chapter. The perception of one thus subjectively qualified, he considers to have been understood by the Rabbins under the term בת קול, and not the φωνὴ itself, while however there must have been in such instances an objective supernatural φωνὴ to be perceived.

immediately before us:—on the day of Pentecost the sight of the *tongues as of fire* which rested on the head of each one of the disciples, would seem to have been confined to the disciples themselves, both from the words of S. Luke, *there appeared unto them* (ὤφθησαν αὐτοῖς, Acts ii. 3), and also from the fact of some daring to mock.

From the analogy of these instances, we may fairly suppose it probable that the opening of the heavens and the descent of the Holy Ghost were not visible to all, but only to our Lord and the Baptist, in consequence of a supernatural unveiling of their organs of perception. This view not only best explains the language of S. Matthew and S. Mark (*he saw*), but also enables us to understand the stress which the Baptist laid (John i. 32—34) on *his* having seen the Spirit descend, and his resting the fact on his own testimony alone. It further yields us the most probable solution of the seeming discrepancy above referred to, between the Evangelists S. John and S. Matthew: for we may conceive of the whole transaction as follows:—

S. John Baptist may, or may not, have been acquainted previously with his Divine kinsman[12]; for this is not quite certain; but it *is* certain that he did not know Him as the Christ. When he received his

[12] The circumstance of his being related to Jesus (Luke i. 36) is in favour of the supposition of some degree of personal acquaintance. But, on the other hand, the distance of their abodes—John being in Judea, and Jesus in Nazareth—makes the supposition improbable; and, in particular, the language of S. Luke (i. 80) seems pointedly intended to draw off our thoughts from entertaining any such idea.

commission to go and proclaim the near approach of the Kingdom of Heaven, he also received a specific revelation, that amongst the multitudes who came to him, One should be pointed out to him as the Christ of God by some visible token of the Anointing Spirit descending and resting upon Him. In faith, and no doubt with eager and solemn anticipation, he day after day pursued his appointed work; until at length, as Jesus approached him, the Holy Spirit kindled within him a sudden sense of our Lord's greatness, whilst at the same time it exalted his perceptions, enabling him to take in spiritual sights and sounds, which in his ordinary state he could not have perceived. Accordingly, he received Him as a servant would receive his master, with humility and with awe; and only upon His command that he should just then[13] submit to this temporary inversion of Their mutual relations, in compliance with the Will of Heaven binding Them Both, could the lowly and self-renouncing prophet consent to assume a seemingly superior position in baptizing Him. After doing so, he observed Him with reverential awe as He immediately went up out of the water; and while the adorable Jesus, likewise in a state of vision, knelt down to receive His sealing consecration (John vi. 27; x. 36), John as well as his Lord beheld the

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[13] Ἄφες ἄρτι. The translation of our Authorised Version seems fairly to represent the sense: *Suffer it to be so now.* So S. Chrysostom (*Homil.* xii. *in Matth.*), Οὐχ ἁπλῶς εἶπεν, ἄφες· ἀλλὰ τὸ ἄρτι προσέθηκε· οὐ γὰρ ἐνηνεκῶς ταῦτα ἔσται, φησίν, ἀλλ' ὄψει με ἐν τούτοις οἷς ἐπιθυμεῖς· ἄρτι μέντοι ὑπόμεινον τοῦτο.

awful sign which had been promised, and no doubt also heard the Words which confirmed its attestation; and as Jesus was led away by the Spirit from the Jordan into the recesses of the wilderness, the eye of the Prophet, which *God had opened*, followed Him, and he continued to see the sign of His anointing still resting upon His head, until His receding Form was lost to his view (*it abode upon Him*, John i. 32).

If we take the whole narrative thus, we can understand how the holy prophet could say that he knew Him not before, and yet felt that awe on His approach which S. Matthew describes, and which so clearly proves that he then recognized Him in His true character[14].

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[14] We have a remarkable passage in Justin Martyr (*Dial. c. Tryph.* ii. p. 315) respecting the baptism of our Lord, which may be worth quoting. It is as follows: Καὶ τότε ἐλθόντος τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰορδάνην ποταμὸν ἔνθα ὁ Ἰωάννης ἐβάπτιζε, κατελθόντος τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ ὕδωρ, καὶ πῦρ ἀνήφθη ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ, καὶ ἀναδύντος αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος, ὡς περιστερὰν τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα ἐπιπτῆναι ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἔγραψαν οἱ ἀπόστολοι αὐτοῦ τούτου τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἡμῶν. On which passage Thirlby remarks, that the writer of a treatise *De Baptismo Hæreticorum* (found among the works of S. Cyprian) mentions a book in use among certain heretics entitled, *Pauli Prædicatio;* in quo libro, adds the said writer, contra omnes scripturas et de peccato proprio confitentem invenies Christum qui solus omnino nihil deliquit, et ad accipiendum Joannis baptisma pœne invitum a matre sua Maria esse compulsum; item cum baptizaretur ignem super aquam esse visum. Lastly, Epiphanius (H. xxx. 13) speaking of the Gospel of the Ebionites, says: καὶ μετὰ τὸ εἰπεῖν πολλά, ἐπιφέρει ὅτι τοῦ λαοῦ βαπτισθέντος ἦλθε καὶ Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἐβαπτίσθη ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἰωάννου, καὶ ὡς ἀνῆλθεν ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος, ἠνοίγησαν οἱ οὐρανοί, καὶ εἶδε τὸ Πνεῦμα τοῦ Θεοῦ—καὶ εὐθὺς περιέλαμψε τὸν τόπον φῶς μέγα. Did this so variously-attested tradition originate in an authentic mention by the holy Baptist of some luminous phenomenon,

Looking more closely at the several particulars, we observe that the phænomenon described by S. Matthew and S. Luke as the *opening of heaven*, and by S. Mark as the *rending of the heavens*, occurred again, as has been already noted, at the martyrdom of S. Stephen, for he likewise saw *the heavens open* (ἀνεῳγμένους). Compare Isai. lxiv. 1; Ezek. i. 1. The visual phænomenon we may suppose to have been that of the blue sky parting, as if to admit a sight into the higher regions behind, and to open the way for the coming forth thence of some spiritual manifestation. In John i. 52, our Divine Lord promised that men should thenceforward *see the heaven continuing open* (ἀνεῳγότα), *and angels ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.*

The addition which S. Luke, in the words *in a corporeal form* (σωματικῷ εἴδει ὡσεὶ περιστεράν), makes to the account of S. Matthew and S. Mark, who simply record that the Holy Spirit was seen descending *like a dove* (ὡσεὶ περιστεράν), determines the comparison as referring, not merely to the proverbial swiftness of the dove's flight (Ps. lv. 5; Isai. lx. 8), or to any waving or other kind of motion attributable to that bird, but to the form in which the Holy Spirit displayed Its descent upon the Redeemer. On the day of Pentecost, it seemed good that the form in which It descended should be different; on which occasion, the *tongues* then seen were in harmony with

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nomenon, which in that hour of celestial illumination lighted up to his eye the waters of the Jordan? Comp. Luke ii. 9 (περιέλαμψεν αὐτούς); Acts xxvi. 13.

the result, which Divine inspiration, in that its first and most concentrated influx, wrought in the infant Church (Acts ii. 4; x. 4, 6; xix. 6); a result which was no doubt itself yet further symbolical. In the present case, we may venture with becoming humility to interpret that visual form as indicative of the gentleness and kindness which were to characterise the manifestation of God made in the Christ (compare Matth. xii. 16—20; ix. 29; x. 16)[15]. As Calvin so well observes: Scimus quid Christo tribuat Jesaias propheta xlii. 3. Calamum inquit quassatum non confringet, linum fumigans non extinguet, non clamabit, nec vox ejus audietur. Propter hanc Christi mansuetudinem, qua blande et comiter peccatores in spem salutis vocavit, et quotidie invitat, Spiritus Sanctus super eum descendit in specie columbæ. Atque in hoc symbolo illustre suavissimæ consolationis pignus nobis exhibitum est, ne metuamus ad Christum accedere, qui nos non formidabili Spiritus potentia, sed amabili et placida gratia indutus nobis occurrit.

It has been further observed, that the Jews regarded the dove as the symbol of the Holy Spirit[16];

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[15] Thus S. Chrysostom: Διατί δὲ ἐν εἴδει περιστερᾶς; ἥμερον τὸ ζῶον καὶ καθαρόν. ἐπεὶ οὖν καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα, πραότητός ἐστι πνεῦμα, διὰ τοῦτο ἐν τούτῳ φαίνεται (*Homil.* xii. *in Matth*).

[16] Reference is made not merely to the Targum (*Chagiga*) on Gen. i. 2 (מְרַחֶפֶת), but also to the Targum on Canticles ii. 12, where *the voice of the turtle* is explained as being the voice of God's Spirit. Schöttgen (*Hor. Heb.* ii. p. 537) further informs us, that the book *Sohar* connects Noah's dove with the spirit of the Messiah.

and the conclusion has been drawn, that God in His condescension employed on this occasion a symbol, which the Jews were already prepared to understand as indicating the Holy Spirit's presence. If there be anything in this supposition, we must, at all events, believe that the form was chosen, not merely in accommodation to any such symbolism amongst the Jews, but also as so aptly expressing the character which was preeminently to mark the Redeemer's spirit and work.

By the Holy Spirit thus descending upon Him, so to speak in the entireness of its Being (*without measure*, John iii. 34), the humanity of our Lord, in addition to its being, as it was before, the *tabernacle* of Deity (John i. 14, ἐσκήνωσεν), became itself also participant, in a degree infinitely above all other men, in a *Divine nature*. Again, I cannot forbear quoting from the rich repository of keen exegetical remark and deep Christian sentiment found in the commentary of the Genevan Reformer : Christus ad prædicandum se accingens, tam Baptismo initiatus est in munus suum, quam Spiritu Sancto instructus. Apparet ergo Spiritus Sanctus Joanni super Christum descendens, qui admoneat, nihil in ipso Christo carnale vel terrenum esse quærendum, sed quasi divinum hominem e cœlo prodire in quo regnat virtus Spiritus Sancti. Scimus quidem, ipsum esse Deum manifestatum in carne : sed in persona quoque ministri et humana ejus natura, cœlestis virtus consideranda est.

What change that *Anointing* (Isai. lxi. 1 ; Acts x. 38) produced in the Mind of the adorable Jesus, no

man can undertake to determine, without justly incurring the charge of presumption[17].

In recording the Divine voice, which at that hour of high Revelation penetrated the opened organs of the Baptist as well as the Lord Jesus Christ, a slight difference is observable between S. Matthew and the other two Evangelists, S. Mark and S. Luke. S. Matthew gives the words thus: *This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* The other two Evangelists concur in this form: *Thou art my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*[18]. In the voice heard

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[17] Herein I cannot but think that Neander (*Leben Jesu*), in his most laudable anxiety to penetrate into the full meaning of this great transaction, has overstepped the limits which the mysteriousness of the Incarnation prescribes to the efforts of human investigation.

[18] Assentit Fides: Tu es Filius Dei. Matth. xvi. 16. *Bengel.* The same most significant annotator observes on the words, ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ ηὐδόκησα: *Amor* est quiddam naturale, quia Hic est Filius; *beneplacitum*, quasi superveniens, quia *facit*, quæ Patri placent.—Est æterna στοργὴ erga Unigenitum, est comitas perpetua erga Mediatorem, et in illo erga nos, filios reconciliatos. Bengel further remarks that ἐν is here both *objective*, which it certainly is, and also *causal*, as in Ephes. i. 6. But surely it cannot be both in one place. Maldonatus's opinion is, that ἐν is *causal* and not *objective;* and he also produces passages such as Ps. lxxv. 8; lxxxiv. 1; in which רָצָה, rendered by the Septuagint εὐδοκεῖν, has, he thinks, the meaning of *being reconciled;* and he infers that the sense of the words before us is this: In quo, id est, per quem, placatus ac reconciliatus sum mundo, hoc est, placari et reconciliari decrevi; in quem cum intueor, omnem iram et offensionem pono. But he fails to establish this sense for רָצָה; for though being favourable may, under certain circumstances, *imply* reconciliation, it does not therefore mean the same thing. However pleasing this interpretation, it is more remote from the words than that which is followed by our Authorized Version, and therefore is not to be preferred.

on the Mount of Transfiguration, all the three Evangelists, as well as S. Peter, agree in the words: *This is my Beloved Son* (Matth. xvii. 5; Mark ix. 7; Luke ix. 35; 2 Pet. i. 17). We cannot, however, infer from this latter fact, that the form given by S. Matthew in the account of the Baptism, was the one in which the words were actually uttered, in preference to the other. The cases of the Baptism and the Transfiguration were different[19]. At the Transfiguration the persons addressed were the disciples, and in them the Church, being then exhorted to *hear* Christ, rather than Moses and the prophets. At the Baptism, if we may venture so closely to scan the Divine purpose, the instruction of the Baptist or others, was not the main thing designed. Rather, in the hour in which Jesus stepped forth to receive the office of the Christ, those awful words were a voice of mysterious and heavenly power radiated from the Father into the Soul of Jesus Himself; one of those manifestations of communion betwixt the Supreme Father and the Mediator, which involved an expression of thought, such as concerned us, it is true, most deeply, but was not meant for our full comprehension. What mortal man can presume to define what that is, which God the Father intended herein to speak to the Heart of His Incarnate Son? We find ourselves

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[19] Utri autem verba, incertum; verosimile tamen est Marcum et Lucam verba recitasse, et quia plures sunt, et quia consentaneum fuit, ut in quem Spiritus Sanctus descendebat, ad eum vox dirigeretur; sicut in Transfiguratione, quia vox dirigebatur ad Apostolos, non dixit, Tu es Filius Meus: sed, Hic est Filius Meus dilectus. *Maldonatus.*

here in presence of a veil, before which we may indeed muse with adoring wonder, but which we dare not take upon ourselves to draw aside.

Happy is it for us, however, that we can say with Calvin: Cum hoc præconio nobis oblatus fuit a Patre Christus, quum palam ad obeundum munus Mediatoris prodiit, ut, hoc adoptionis nostræ pignore freti, intrepide vocemus Deum ipsum Patrem nostrum. Filii titulus vere et naturaliter in Christum unum competit, sed tamen in carne nostra declaratus est Filius Dei, ut quem unus jure suo Patrem habet, nobis etiam conciliet. Quare Deus, Christum nobis Mediatorem cum Filii elogio producens, se nobis omnibus Patrem esse declarat. Cp. Ephes. i. 6.

Chapter III.

THE TEMPTATION OF THE LORD JESUS.

Matt. iv. 1—11. Mark i. 12, 13. Luke iv. 1—13.

MATTH. iv. 1; Mark i. 12; Luke iv. 1, 2. The sacred Evangelists all concur in recording that the blessed Jesus after His baptism withdrew into the wilderness;—S. Mark adds *immediately;* in which he is in perfect harmony with S. Matthew and S. Luke. This important particular might have been gathered from their narratives, even if S. Mark had not specified it. The Evangelists also concur in ascribing this withdrawal of our Lord into the wilderness, to the impulse of the Holy Spirit[1]. This

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[1] In S. Luke's words, καὶ ἤγετο ἐν τῷ Πνεύματι εἰς τὴν ἔρημον, the ἐν does not mean *by*, as if it were equivalent to ὑπό; for this is a sense in which, I believe, it never occurs before the agent after a passive verb. It must be understood as in Luke ii. 27, ἦλθεν ἐν τῷ Πνεύματι εἰς τὸ ἱερόν. Compare also Matth. xxii. 43, *David* ἐν Πνεύματι *called Him Lord.* Rev. i. 10, ἐγενόμην ἐν τῷ Πνεύματι. The expression denotes a peculiar state of inspiration and supernatural guidance; *under the influence of the Spirit.* The ἀνήχθη εἰς τὴν ἔρημον ὑπὸ τοῦ Πνεύματος of S. Matthew, and the καὶ εὐθὺς τὸ Πνεῦμα αὐτὸν ἐκβάλλει εἰς τὴν ἔρημον of S. Mark, are *involved* in the words of S. Luke, but are not precisely identical with them. The imperfect ἤγετο does not admit of very easy explanation. We are not authorized to understand it as equivalent to ἤχθη; not even if we connect it closely with ὑπέστρεψεν, as if it were ὑπέστρεψεν καὶ ἤγετο, equivalent to ὑπέστρεψεν ἀγόμενος. On the contrary, the natural construction of the sentence requires us to join it with πειραζόμενος, as expressing contemporaneous action with that participle. Yet it is not very obvious how we can do this, unless with

particular, likewise, is of very great importance for the understanding of the amazing narrative which follows.

The wilderness here spoken of, by a tradition which is commended to our acceptance by its great probability, is determined to be that very wild district extending from Jericho to the Mount of Olives, now called Quarantania, from the forty days' Fast of our Lord. In this wilderness the blessed Jesus is stated by S. Mark to have been during this season *with the wild beasts*;—a dismal and horrid sojourn, even if it was not accompanied by actual danger. But the circumstance which made it to His holy Soul most hideous and distressing was, that there He was

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Lachmann and Tischendorf we adopt the reading of the MSS. B. D. L., ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ, removing the comma which is after these words, and putting it after τεσσαράκοντα. By this means we gain the sense which is given by the Syriac and the Vulgate: *was led about under the influence of the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being during that space continually assailed by temptations of the Devil.* This likewise gives us the same meaning as is conveyed by S. Mark: καὶ ἦν ἐκεῖ ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ἡμέρας τεσσαράκοντα πειραζόμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ Σατανᾶ.—The very facility, which this reading of S. Luke's text gives to the construction of the sentence, is made by some critics an argument against its genuineness; but, on the other hand, it seems necessary for the sense, and the reading of the Textus Receptus: εἰς τὴν ἔρημον may be very plausibly supposed to have originated in an imitation, on the part of the transcribers, of the other Evangelists. We cannot give πειραζόμενος a future sense, as if it were equivalent to the πειρασθῆναι of S. Matthew. Bengel, retaining the received reading, translates it, *ducebatur in desertum*, et in deserto erat *quadraginta dies*; quoting Luke xx. 9, ἀπεδήμησε χρόνους ἱκανούς, *went abroad, and continued abroad a long time*; and Rev. xx. 2, ἔδησεν αὐτὸν χίλια ἔτη. But why *ducebatur*, and not *ductus est*? And how are we to explain πειραζόμενος?

assailed by continual buffetings of the foul Arch-spirit of Darkness. The words of S. Luke imply that those temptations which are recorded, were not the only ones by which He was vexed. (See last note.)

The withdrawal of the adorable Jesus into the wilderness through the direct impulse of the Holy Spirit, we may venture to explain, first objectively, as Calvin has done: Ut prodiret summus Ecclesiæ Doctor et Dei Legatus, tanquam magis a cœlo missus, quam assumptus ex oppido aliquo et communi hominum grege. Sic Mosen, quum Deus per ejus manum promulgare Legem suam vellet, in montem Sinai rapuit, et subductum a populi conspectu quasi in cœleste sacrarium recepit (Exod. xxiv. 12).

But we shall greatly err, if we interpret any act of Christ as designed merely to produce effect on the minds of others. This retirement must have had a subjective purpose as well. This we may suppose to have been, that His Human Nature might thus, in still and rapt communion with Heaven and with Itself, prepare and arm Itself for that mighty and glorious work, to which It had just now been consecrated at His Baptism. By assigning to this retirement such a subjective purpose, we only follow up, and surely not presumptuously, the view of His true Humanity, which has ever been taught by the Church, and which as to Its intellectual part is so strikingly illustrated by what we read in Luke ii. 40, 52[2].

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[2] The reader will notice particularly the words πληρούμενον σοφίας (in the present tense) and προέκοπτεν ἡλικίᾳ καὶ σοφίᾳ, which represent most unmistakeably the gradual character of the holy

But S. Matthew has himself supplied us with the solution, in saying that *He was led up into the wilder-*

Child's intellectual growth. Indeed, how could Jesus have appeared to us in the consoling character of *perfect man*, so essential to the idea of His most precious Mediation, as well as *perfect God*, if it had been otherwise? And this representation of the holy Scriptures has been embraced and heartily clung to by the foremost doctors of the Church. Thus S. Athanasius (*Sermon.* iv. *contra Arian.*) and S. Cyril (Lib. x. *Thes.* cap. 7) in ancient times. In modern, it will be necessary to refer only to three names, whose views will be readily allowed to represent very fairly the doctrine of the English Church.

Hooker (*Ecclesiastical Polity*, iv. 53) writes thus: "The sequel of which conjunction of natures in the Person of Christ, is no abolishment of natural properties appertaining to either substance, no transition or transmigration thereof out of one substance into another; finally, no such mutual infusion, as really causeth the same natural operations or properties to be made common unto both substances; but whatever is natural to Deity, the same remaineth in Christ uncommunicated into His Manhood, and whatsoever natural to manhood, His Deity thereof is incapable." Again, "Let us, therefore, set it down for a rule or principle so necessary as nothing more, to the plain deciding of all doubts and questions about the union of natures in Christ, that of both natures there is a co-operation often, an association always, but never any mutual participation, whereby the properties of the one are infused into the other."

Bishop Taylor (*Life of Christ*, Vol. ii. Heber's Edition, p. 142) says, with reference to Luke ii. 52: "They that love to serve God in hard questions use to dispute whether Christ did truly, or in appearance only, increase in wisdom. For being personally united to the Word, and being the eternal Wisdom of the Father, it seemeth to them that a plenitude of wisdom was as natural to the whole person as to the Divine nature. But others, fixing their belief upon the words of the story, which equally affirms Christ as properly to have *increased in favour with God* as *with man, in wisdom* as *in stature*, they apprehend no inconvenience in affirming it to belong to the verity of human nature, to have degrees of understanding as well as of other perfections; and though the humanity of Christ made up the same person with the Divinity, yet they think the Divinity still to be free, even in those communications which were imparted to his

ness, to be tempted by the Devil. This likewise may be explained, first, objectively; again in the words of

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his inferior nature; and the Godhead might as well suspend the emanation of all the treasures of wisdom upon the humanity for a time, as he did the beatifical vision, which most certainly was not imparted in the interval of his sad and dolorous passion." There can be no doubt which was Bishop Taylor's own opinion.

Bishop Pearson *On the Creed* (p. 252, Nichol's Edition). "And certainly if the Son of God would vouchsafe to take the frailty of our flesh, He would not omit the nobler part, our soul, without which He could not be Man. For *Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature* (Luke ii. 52); one in respect of His body, the other of His soul. Wisdom belongeth not to the flesh, nor can the knowledge of God, which is infinite, increase; He then, whose knowledge did improve together with His years, must have a subject proper for it, which was no other than a human soul. This was the seat of His finite understanding and directed will, distinct from the will of His Father, and consequently of His Divine nature; as appeareth by that known submission: *Not my will, but thine, be done* (Luke xxii. 42)." Again (p. 253): "If we should conceive such a mixtion and confusion of substances, as to make an union of natures, we should be so far from acknowledging Him to be both God and Man, that thereby we should profess Him to be neither God nor Man, but a person of a nature as different from both, as all mixed bodies are distinct from each element which concurs unto their composition."

It would be easy to accumulate similar statements of Catholic doctrine from the most eminent teachers of the church, whether at home or abroad. But these will suffice to point out the nature of that position, from which alone it is impossible to form any conception whatever of the whole doctrine of the blessed Jesus's inspiration;—a doctrine of which all the Gospels are full, and most of all the Gospel of John the Θεόλογος;—or to understand, in any degree, the fact of our Lord's Temptation in the wilderness.

Perhaps some readers of Theology may resent the length to which this note has been carried, as altogether unnecessary. But it may be questioned, whether antagonism against degrading views of our Saviour's Person has not, in very many minds, produced a *tendency* towards sentiments which found their dogmatic statement in the teaching of Appollinaris. Though a vigorous maintainer of the

Calvin: Mihi non dubium est, quin Deus in Filii sui persona, tanquam in clarissimo speculo, ostenderit, quam infestus et importunus humanæ salutis adversarius sit Satan.—Simul notandum est, Filium Dei subiisse ultro tentationes de quibus nunc agitur, et cum Diabolo quasi conserta manu esse luctatum, ut sua victoria nobis triumphum acquireret. Thus also S. Ambrose: Plenus igitur Jesus Spiritu Sancto agebatur in desertum: consilio, ut diabolum provocaret; nam nisi ille certasset, non mihi iste vicisset: mysterio, ut Adam illum de exsilio liberaret [—this will be understood by what S. Ambrose says, § 7. In deserto Adam, in deserto Christus; sciebat enim ubi posset invenire damnatum, quem ad Paradisum resoluto errore revocaret—]: exemplo ut ostenderet nobis Diabolum ad meliora tendentibus invidere; et tunc magis esse cavendum, ne mysterii gratiam deserat mentis infirmitas. *Expos. Ev. Sec. Luc. Lib.* IV. §. 14. This objective purpose is likewise finely expressed by S. Augustin (*In Psalm.* lx.): Agnosce te in illo tentatum, et te in illo agnosce vincentem.

But, further, if we consider the time at which this took place,—immediately after His inauguration into His Messianic Office, and before He came forth in the public discharge of that Office amongst men;—and

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Nicene doctrine against the Arians, he fell under the just censure of the Church at the Council of Constantinople (A. D. 381. *Canon* 7) for teaching, that while in our Lord's Person the σῶμα and the ψυχὴ ἄλογος, the principle of animal life, were properly human, the ψυχὴ λογικὴ, νοῦς, or πνεῦμα, which in the *trichotomical* theory of human nature was the third part, was not human, but that its part was taken by the Divine λόγος or νοῦς Θεῖος.

also the character of the temptations themselves, as they are recorded for us by the holy Evangelists, that is to say, that they were aimed to educe Him to a misuse of the powers with which He had been invested as the Christ of God, and not, in form or subject-matter, to any of those sins which men in ordinary circumstances can commit[3]; and if we then observe that FULL OF THE HOLY GHOST[4], He was *led by the Spirit into the wilderness, in order that he might be tempted by the Devil* in this particular way; it hardly will seem a rash or unwarranted explanation, that subjectively, the temptation had a twofold purpose:— partly, more fully to develope to the human consciousness of our blessed Redeemer what the nature of His stupendous work on our behalf was to be, by vividly exhibiting the form into which the Evil One would fain have warped and perverted it; and partly, to arm His holy soul against those conflicts, of which His temptation was, as Bengel says, a specimen, and

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[3] I say *in form or subject-matter;* for most fully must we concur in Bengel's observation: Tentatio hæc specimen est totius exinanitionis Christi; omniumque tentationum, non solum moralium sed spiritualium maxime, epitome, quas machinatus est diabolus ab initio. This view the reader will find drawn out in detail by S. Cyprian in his Treatise, *De Jejunio et Tentationibus Christi*, and by S. Ambrose in his *Exposition*. In modern days, it will suffice to refer to Dr. Mill's *Sermons preached at Cambridge* in 1844, as Christian Advocate.

[4] These expressions render in the highest degree improbable the notion put forward by Olshausen, that during these temptations there was a suspension of the Holy Spirit's influence on His soul, leaving It to Itself. On the contrary, the representation of the Evangelists is, that the blessed Redeemer was then most fully armed and, so to speak, secured against the Tempter's arts and power.

which throughout His earthly course were to be continually reproduced in His path[5].

But how was our blessed Lord capable of being tempted? On this difficult point I cannot do better than first quote the following judicious observations of Calvin: Hac lege factus est homo, ut affectus nostros una cum carne susciperet.—Solutio difficilis non erit, si in mentem veniat, integram Adæ naturam, quum adhuc pura illic fulgeret Dei imago, subjectam tamen fuisse tentationibus. Quotquot in homine sunt corporales affectus, totidem illius tentandi occasiones arripit Satan. Atque hæc merito censetur naturæ humanæ infirmitas, sensus moveri rebus objectis; sed quæ per se vitiosa non esset, nisi accederet corruptio, qua fit ut nunquam adoriatur nos Satan, quin vulnus aliquod infligat, vel saltem aliqua punctione nos lædat, Christum hac in parte naturæ integritas a nobis separavit, quanquam non media quædam in eo conditio imaginanda est, qualis fuit in Adam, cui tantum datum fuerat, posse non peccare. Atqui scimus, ea Spiritus virtute munitum fuisse Christum, ut Satanæ telis penetrabilis non esset.

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[5] The great objection to this view is, that it has not been propounded (so far as I know) by any great teacher in the Catholic Church. It is therefore not without reluctance that I have stated it. Nevertheless, as it appears, in my humble judgment, to furnish the key for unlocking the true meaning of this great transaction viewed subjectively, and also to be in entire accordance with the Catholic doctrine of the entire Humanity as well as Godhead of our Lord, I beg leave to submit it to the judgment of others;—being most willing that it should perish, if it can be justly regarded either as improbable in itself, or as a presumptuous prying into a subject too high and sacred for our investigations.

This lucid exposition contemplates, however, only the inspired and holy Humanity of our Lord; but how are we to connect the notion of His Tentability with that of the Incarnation? Perhaps the following observations of Olshausen bring us to the utmost limits to which we can press the enquiry. "The very idea of the Redeemer compels us to admit along with it the possibility of falling (parallel with the *posse non peccare* of Adam), because without this possibility merit is inconceivable. Moreover all the consolation, which poor wretched man, striving with sin, derives from the thought, that the Redeemer Himself tasted the bitterness of this conflict in all its forms (Hebr. ii. 17, 18), would be annihilated, if the objective possibility of falling were denied in the case of Christ. This possibility, however, (we must allow) can only be understood as purely objective; for so far as in the Person of Christ God became Man, so far we must ascribe to Him also the *non posse peccare*. This blending together of the possibility of falling and the necessity of being victorious over evil, is a mystery which is one with the very idea of the God-man[6]." As S. Chrysostom has observed on another occasion: *τὸ ἐκπλῆττον ἐκεῖνο ἦν, τὸ Θεὸν ὄντα βουληθῆναι γενέσθαι ἄνθρωπον· τὰ δὲ ἄλλα λοιπὸν κατὰ λόγον ἕπεται ἅπαντα.*

S. Matthew (iv. 2) and S. Luke (iv. 2) inform us, that for the space of forty days our Lord ate nothing. We are at once reminded of Elijah's preternatural

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[6] *Commentar.* Vol. I. p. 181. See Dr. Mill's second Sermon, in which he treats on the subject of our Divine Lord's Tentability, together with the notes.

fast (1 Kings xix. 8); and of the more strikingly analogous case of Moses, when he received the Law from God in the solitude of the mountain-top (Exod. xxxiv. 28). In each case, there seems to have been a miraculous state of communion with the invisible world, during the continuance of which there was a suspension of the ordinary corporeal sensations. "He continues in the wilderness," observes Bp. Taylor (*Life of Christ*, I. *ad Sect.* ix. 9), "forty days and forty nights, without meat or drink, attending to the immediate addresses and colloquies with God;—His conversation being, in this interval, but a resemblance of angelical perfection, and His fasts not an instrument of mortification, for He needed none: He had contracted no stain from His own nor His parents' acts; neither do we find that He was at all hungry or afflicted with His abstinence, till after the expiration of forty days. He was afterwards an-hungred, said the Evangelist. And His abstinence from meat might be a defecation of His faculties, and an opportunity of prayer, but we are not sure it intended anything else." In this way, we can understand the emphasis with which both S. Matthew and S. Luke state, that it was not till after the expiration of the forty days that our Redeemer felt hunger[7].

Bengel has noticed, that as forty days elapsed between the Baptism of our Lord and His coming

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[7] This would not be affected by the omission of ὕστερον from the text of S. Luke, if it be supposed to have been introduced by transcribers from S. Matthew. It is stated to be wanting in MSS. B. D. L.

forth to the world, so also forty days elapsed between His Resurrection, as if in preparation, and His Ascension into heaven.

S. Matthew (iv. 3) says that *the Devil came to Him*[8]. It seems to be utterly idle to conjecture in what form Satan appeared, or even to inquire whether he *appeared* at all[9]. It is enough that we may be certain both that his presence was real, and also that it was external to our Divine Lord.

The Devil said unto Him, If thou art the Son of God, command this stone that it become a loaf of bread (Luke iv. 3). *Command that these stones become loaves of bread* (Matth. iv. 3). Not that the speaker meant that Jesus was thus to verify His claim to be the Son of God, and silence or satisfy the doubts which he, i. e. Satan, affected to entertain[10]; nor that

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[8] Tempus captavit Tentator. Eo videlicet anni tempore in deserto degebat Jesus, quo nox longior, ferarum rapacitas excitatior, tempestas inclementior, neque frugum aliqua vel in arboribus vel alicubi fuit copia. *Bengel.* I am not precisely aware on what date Bengel builds this determination of the season of the year, or why the Church celebrates the Baptism of our Lord at the Epiphany. But the hypothesis agrees with the circumstance, that our Lord appears to have gone up to celebrate the Passover at Jerusalem not long after He commenced His public ministry (John ii. 13); as it also explains more completely the apparent absence in the wilderness of any means of relieving hunger.

[9] See on this subject Bp. Taylor's *Life of Christ*, i. ix. 7.

[10] A view which (I venture to think) Dr. Mill makes too prominent in his paraphrase of Satan's words (*Sermons*, p. 70). So likewise Bengel. Calvin justly argues from the tenor of our Lord's reply: Satanam recta aggressum fuisse Christi fidem, ut, ea extincta, Christum ad illicitos et perversos victus quærendi modos impelleret. Maldonatus agrees in the same exposition, paraphrasing Satan's words thus: Quandoquidem Filius Dei es, ne famem patiare, sed

he openly sneered at His accepting such a title. The purport of the words is rather to seduce Him to misuse the power which, as the Son of God, he allows Him to possess. The conjunction *if* (εἰ) does not here express doubt, but only logical connexion, as in the Greek of Matth. vi. 30; John vii. 23; xiii. 17, 32.

The omission of the article before υἱός, whilst added before Θεοῦ, both here and v. 9 of S. Luke (v. 6 in S. Matthew), might tempt the unwary student to translate the words, *a son of God*. But Mark i. 1 and Matth. xxvii. 40 prove that such a rendering is no way called for[11].

The art of the Tempter in first appealing to the sensuous part of our Lord's nature has been the subject of frequent remark[12].

Matth. iv. 4. Luke iv. 4. Our blessed Lord puts

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quia potes, et aliunde non suppetit cibus, dic ut lapides isti panes fiant. Hoc enim illius serpentis calliditati magis conveniebat ita tentare, ut non tentare sed bene consulere videatur. Νομίζων ὑποκλέπτειν αὐτὸν τοῖς ἐγκωμίοις, says S. Chrysostom. It is vain and illusive to attempt to determine what was Satan's knowledge or ignorance, or what were his feelings and aims. He is revealed to us only objectively, and not subjectively. This is a matter on which the ancient Fathers are apt to direct, probably, far too much of their own and their readers' attention.

[11] See Bp. Middleton (*Article*, &c.) on Matth. iv. 3, where he shows that υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ and υἱὸς Θεοῦ are both of them equivalent to ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ.

[12] Thus S. Chrysostom (*in Matth.*): Σὺ δέ μοι σκόπει τοῦ πονηροῦ δαίμονος ἐκείνου τὴν κακουργίαν, καὶ πόθεν ἄρχεται τῶν παλαισμάτων, καὶ πῶς τῆς οἰκείας οὐκ ἐπιλανθάνεται τέχνης ἀφ' ὧν γὰρ καί τὸν πρῶτον ἐξέβαλεν ἄνθρωπον, καὶ ἑτέρους μυρίους περιέβαλε κακοῖς, ἀπὸ τούτων καὶ ἐνταῦθα πλέκει τὸν δόλον, τῆς κατὰ τὴν γαστέρα ἀκρασίας λέγω. So S. Ambrose: Inde cœpit unde jam vicit. *Expos.* iv. 17.

aside the temptation by the citation of the inspired words of the Old Testament. Nec enim frustra Paulus verbum Dei gladium spiritualem nominat, et fidei scuto nos instruit. Ephes. vi. 16, 17. (*Calvin.*) The passage referred to is in Deut. viii. 3[13]: *He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the* LORD *doth man live.* The expression *that which goeth out of the mouth of God*, denotes *a declared purpose or ordinance of God.* Thus Lament. iii. 38: *Out of the mouth of the Most High proceedeth not evil and good?* Judg. xi. 36: *Do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth.* Jerem. xliv. 17: *We will certainly do whatever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth.* The meaning, then, of Moses's words is this: By feeding the Israelites in so supernatural a way, by the manna, God showed that in supplying the wants of His creatures, He is not restricted to the ordinary means of human sustenance, but, when these fail, we may still look in faith to Him for some appointment by which He will yet meet our necessities. This our fasting and exhausted Redeemer applies to His own case; and in doing so, He showed that He felt it to be fit-

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[13] The quotation in S. Luke, οὐκ ἐπ' ἄρτῳ μόνῳ ζήσεται ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ παντὶ ῥήματι Θεοῦ, is exact from the Septuagint, except in the omission of three words which are supplied in S. Matthew, who has ἐπὶ παντὶ ῥήματι ἐκπορευομένῳ διὰ στόματος Θεοῦ; this latter is nearer to the Hebrew עַל כָּל־מוֹצָא פִי־יְהוָה.

ting for Him, even under the most pressing bodily distress, to refer Himself in patient faith to the will and providence of God.

It is clear that both Satan and our Lord Himself regarded the proposed use of His miraculous powers as not consistent with God's ordinance. Otherwise, wherein lay the sinfulness of the miracle which Satan suggested? And in accordance with this conviction, we see Him throughout His earthly ministry habitually submitting to privations and sufferings, which the slightest exercise of the power that He evidently possessed might have removed in an instant. Instead of at any time working a miracle to relieve Himself of the manifold physical inconvenience and pain He had to endure, He employed the unlimited control which He possessed over the material world only in achieving acts of beneficence to others[14]. This was a protracted course of self-control amidst constant temptation, which is unparalleled in the history of mankind. And it was a course of self-control which, we see in the narrative before us, was adopted and persevered in, from regard to *the will of Him who sent Him;* for as the temptation by which He was now assailed was only the concentrated exhibition of a temptation that pervaded His whole course, so likewise the reply by which He cast it away from Him, represents the spirit by which He ever encountered

[14] His cursing the barren fig-tree is not an exception; for it was evidently an instance of the *sermo propheticus realis* so commonly employed by the prophets of the Old Testament;—a warning in deed interpreted by the warning in word which we find recorded Luke xiii. 6—9.

the like solicitation. Instead of relieving Himself by miracle, He felt that He was called upon to wait in patience and faith for whatever word might proceed out of the mouth of God, for removing the evils under which He was suffering.

And if the general view above given (pp. 74, 5) of the subjective purpose of the Temptation in the wilderness is correct, we may infer that this particular solicitation was designed to exhibit more distinctly to the human Consciousness of the blessed Jesus the will of God on this particular point. And like as in the last and most fearful hour of conflict, an Angel descended from heaven to *strengthen* His almost fainting Humanity (Luke xxii. 43); so may we, with no irreverence, but rather with a thankful and adoring sense of His marvellous condescension and love to our race, suppose, that in moments, when the weakness of physical nature asked for that relief which His higher Nature, or the power of God's Spirit resting with Him, might so readily have supplied, His Humanity was strengthened to the patient fulfilment of His appointed work (John xvii. 4) by the very reminiscence of the clear and vivid manifestation of its propriety which, as He has Himself taught His Church[15], was thus made to Him in the wilderness[16].

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[15] The knowledge of this entire part of His history was either derived to the Evangelists from a special historical revelation made by the Holy Spirit, which though not utterly inconceivable (compare Luke i. 45; 1 Cor. xi. 23), was yet not the usual way by which matters of a historical nature, however supernatural, became known to the sacred writers—; or from its communication by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself to His disciples.

[16] The ethical character of the Evangelical miracles is strongly

Luke iv. 5. Matth. iv. 8. Following the order in which S. Luke has placed the three different solicitations (the true order cannot be determined); we read next, that *the Devil took him up into an exceedingly high mountain*[17]. It is perhaps impossible to decide whether this, as well as the transition to the Temple, was a corporeal or only a spiritual act. S. Paul *did not know whether he was in the body, or out of the body*, when he *was caught up* into *Paradise*, and again into the *Third Heaven* (2 Cor. xii. 2, 3, 4). That the whole transaction recorded in this section of the Evangelical narrative, cannot be referred to the standard of ordinary phænomena, is clear from the supernatural character of the Fasting of our Lord, as well as from the words which we shall have immediately next to consider.

But whatever was the real character of the *leading* or *taking up*[18], which is here ascribed to Satan, the remark of S. Gregory (quoted by Maldonatus) applies: Nil mirum est, si Christus a Diabolo se permisit circumduci, qui a membris illius se permisit

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illustrated by this narrative. Hess (*Lebensgeschichte Jesu*, Vol. I. p. 201) well observes: Hätten die Evangelisten, denen man auch selbst oft Wundersucht vorwirft, nur etwas auffallend Wunderbares hier erzählen wollen, sie hätten ohne Bedenken Steine zu Brod werden lassen. Nur würde es dann freilich nicht eine abgelehnte *Versuchung* gewesen seyn.

[17] The reader will find an interesting note on the mountain which tradition would fain identify with the scene of this temptation, in Dr. Kitto's *Illustrated Commentary*, on Matth. iv. 8.

[18] S. Luke says ἀναγαγών. S. Matthew uses παραλαμβάνει both here and in v. 5;—a word which does not necessarily express anything miraculous. Compare Matth. xvii. 1.

crucifigi.—How constantly we are brought to feel that we *cannot by searching find out* the Son of God, or understand the manifold mysteries of His Life even upon earth!

He shewed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, in a moment (or *point*[19]) *of time.* The attempt, which so many have made to bring this into congruity with the conditions of our common life, is resisted by the whole complexion of the statement. It seems strange that any one should have acquiesced in the explanation, which makes ἡ οἰκουμένη the Holy Land[20], and then supposes that the sensuous prospect from some high hill, the Mons Quarantania to wit, over the countries belonging to Pilate, Herod Antipas, &c., was all that was intended. To speak of nothing further, the words *in a point of time* irrefragably refuse to be understood of any merely sensuous prospect. The paraphrase of Bp. Taylor, or something very

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[19] Στιγμὴ is used in the Septuagint without χρόνου to translate פֶּתַע in Isaiah xxix. 5. So also 2 Macc. ix. 11.

[20] It appears to me that there is no passage in which the term can be shewn to have such a signification. Acts xi. 28, λιμὸν μέγαν μέλλειν ἔσεσθαι ἐφ' ὅλην τὴν οἰκουμένην, and Josephus, *Antiq.* viii. 13. 4, *the king* [Ahab] *sent* περὶ πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην τοὺς ζητήσοντας τὸν προφήτην Ἠλίαν, are most especially relied upon for establishing this sense of the word; but in them the word seems to be used in an indefinite and hyperbolical manner. The passage in Josephus is made clear by Obadiah's saying: *As the Lord thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee*, 1 Kings xviii. 10. For the use of οἰκουμένη by S. Luke, see Acts xi. 28; xvii. 6; xix. 27; xxiv. 5. In ii. 1 of his Gospel, the reference immediately preceding, to Augustus the Emperor of the *Orbis Terrarum*, makes such a restricted interpretation of οἰκουμένη particularly unseasonable.

much like it, is absolutely demanded by the text of the narrative. "By an angelical power, he draws into one centre species and ideas from all the kingdoms and glories of the world (φαινόμενα ἐν τῷ ἀέρι φαντάσματα ἄστατα ὄντα καὶ ἀβέβαια), and makes an admirable map of beauties, and represents it to the eyes of Jesus."

Luke iv. 6, 7. Matth. iv. 9. *And the Devil said, Unto thee will I give all this power and the glory of them; for unto me it hath been delivered, and to whomsoever I will I give it; if therefore thou wilt do worship before me, it shall all be thine.* Satan here openly avows himself, soliciting the homage (see 2 Cor. iv. 4, *the god of this world*) due to the true supreme God alone, and asserting the power to dispose of worldly dominion as he pleases. And yet he refers his power as *world-lord* (κοσμοκράτωρ, Ephes. vi. 12) to a Divine appointment or permission; for the words ἐμοὶ παραδέδοται suppose ὁ παραδούς. If it be thought that this representation was not only false, but so inconsistent with itself, that Satan would never have ventured to seek to impose it upon any man; we may recollect, that all reasoning which persuades to sin, must ever be similarly self-inconsistent as well as false; whilst, on the other hand, the fallacious view here given might be most speciously connected with actual facts. For while it is true that God is Supreme Ruler, experience also sadly illustrates the frequency with which ambition is made successful by crimes, i. e. by acts of virtual homage to the Devil. And we know also that there does exist *a kingdom of Darkness*, of which Satan is the king and head (John xii. 31. Ephes. ii. 2. 1 John v. 19).

There might have appeared to our crafty Archenemy no great improbability in the expectation, that the enchanting vision which his spells had presented to our blessed Redeemer's Spirit, might prevail with Him so far as to beguile Him literally to render him the homage[21] which he here requires. His experience of mankind would too sadly corroborate such a view. Only one act of worship; and all should be His! How often have visions of glory, far less vivid and near, hurried men forward into seas of crime!

Luke iv. 8. Matth. iv. 10[22]. The Lord Jesus puts aside this solicitation likewise by the words of Holy Writ. He quotes the command, given in Deut. vi.

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[21] Προσκυνεῖν is to *kiss* the hand (Herod. ii. 80) or the ground, in token of respect *to* any one. In the New Testament it is constructed sometimes with ἐνώπιον, as in Rev. xv. 4 (compare Gen. xxiii. 12, הִשְׁתַּחוּ לִפְנֵי פ), which is the construction here employed by S. Luke; sometimes, after the Classical form, with the accusative; but most commonly with the simple dative, as here in S. Matthew. In Luke iv. 7, for the πάντα of the textus receptus all later critics prefer πᾶσα sc. ἐξουσία or δόξα, to which the αὐτὴν of the previous verse is to be referred.

[22] The words ὕπαγε ὀπίσω μου, Σατανᾶ, which in the textus receptus of S. Luke preface the citation from the Old Testament, are not of certain authority. They are wanting in the MSS. B. D. L., and in the Syriac and Vulgate versions. They were possibly interpolated from S. Matthew. If genuine, they do not prove that this was the last of the three temptations; for S. Luke evidently did not regard them as a final command to Satan to depart and leave our Lord; since, in that case, he would not have arranged the temptations as he has done. They must be taken in S. Matthew, as well as in S. Luke, as an indignant bidding away of the Tempter in respect to that particular temptation. Compare Matth. xvi. 23.

13,[23] and likewise in Deut. x. 20: *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.* The precept, to confine religious worship to God, was a direct answer to Satan's solicitation, and made compliance with it, for a devout mind, impossible.

If we enquire into the bearing of this solicitation upon the work of the Lord Jesus, it would seem to have been intended to pourtray the fact, that power and kingly authority in this world would only be gained by Him in the way of doing homage to Satan. By the conditions of His Kingdom, the acquisition of the sovereignty destined for the Christ, was to be the result of God's Spirit and God's truth acting as a leaven within the souls of men, and was not to be arrived at in this world by any force overwhelming the opposition of enemies, and setting the crown upon His head by the exercise of merely physical power. Vast miraculous powers had been committed to Jesus. There consequently lay at every moment within His reach that royal and imperial sovereignty, which human nature is so apt to covet. If at any moment He had willed to break through the moral limits prescribed by His Father's will, He *might* have been the king of such an empire, as the most magnificent dreams of worldly ambition have never pourtrayed. But such a step would have been the renunciation of the supreme worship of God, and a submission to the rule of Satan; and the whole soul of our Lord

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[23] The Septuagint, however, in Deuteronomy has: Κύριον τὸν Θεόν σου φοβηθήσῃ (Hebr. תִּירָא) καὶ αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύσεις. But the προσκύνησις is involved in the φόβος here forbidden.

ever responded to that highest precept of morals and religion, which requires us to worship the Lord our God, and Him only to serve.

This temptation—to employ His Messianic powers as a means of acquiring earthly dominion—assailed our Lord from the beginning of His Ministry until its very close. It sometimes addressed Him from the multitudes; once (apparently) from John the Baptist himself (Luke vii. 19); and constantly from His own Apostles;—all being alike fully possessed with the notion that Messiah's Kingdom was to be *of this world;* and all, in consequence, unceasingly challenging, or urging, or longingly desiring Him, to put forth His hand and take the dominion, which with powers such as His evidently lay within His grasp. But His unwavering devotion to the will of His Father fortified Him against all such solicitation, and led Him, not merely to forego worldly glory and power, but to submit to reproach, to obloquy, and at the last to death, because He would not accede to the popular demand.

Luke iv. 9—11. Matth. iv. 5, 6. The scene of temptation is again shifted. It is now removed to *the Holy City*, to *the Temple;* there, *whether in the body, or out of the body, we cannot tell*, or whether in vision merely, we cannot tell, the blessed Lord, by Satan's leading, stands upon the πτερύγιον, or *top ridge of the sacred building*[24], and is solicited to cast Him-

[24] Some uncertainty rests upon the question, What particular part of the sacred edifice is here referred to? Bp. Middleton (*Article*, on Matth. iv. 5) observes: "It is probable, from the meaning of the

self down. The Tempter sustains his solicitation by quoting from that Holy Book, for the words of which

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cognate term πτερόν, that a ridged or pointed roof is intended; for from some of the passages collected by Wetstein, it is evident that πτερὸν is synonymous with ἀετὸς or ἀέτωμα, a term appropriated to the roofs of temples. See Aristoph. *Aves*. 1110, and his scholiast; Dion. Halic. *Antiq. Rom*. ed. Reiske, Vol. II. p. 789; Josephus, Vol. I. p. 109, ed. Huds.; in which last place it is spoken of the Tabernacle; and so applied, as it should seem, on account of the figure, which the transverse section of a pointed roof, or the gable, presents." This agrees with the following description from Josephus of Solomon's Porch. "This cloister deserves to be mentioned better than any other under the sun; for while the valley was very deep, and its bottom could not be seen if you looked from above into the depth; this farther vastly high elevation of the cloister stood upon that height, insomuch that if any one looked down from the top of the battlements, or down both these altitudes, he should be giddy, whilst his sight could not reach to such an immense depth" (*Antiq*. xv. 11. 5). He adds that the middle of the roof was higher than the rest, while the passage also shows that the roof was accessible. It was, then, most probably, on the top ridge of the roof of this cloister that the blessed Jesus is now to be conceived as standing. Some have thought that the roof of the sanctuary is intended; but to this there are several objections. (1.) The word employed by both the Evangelists is ἱεροῦ, and not ναοῦ; and the distinction between the ναὸς, which was the sanctuary, and the ἱερὸν, which was the whole of the sacred buildings (cloisters, &c.) enclosing the courts of the Temple, is constantly observed in the New Testament. (Compare e. g. Luke i. 9; ii. 27; John ii. 14, 19.) (2.) The ναὸς was in the Court of the Priests, to which Jews, not of the tribe of Levi, had no access. (3.) The roof of the ναὸς bristled all over with golden spikes to keep the birds from pitching thereupon, and therefore also was not likely to be the place intended.—In addition to Bp. Middleton's Note quoted above, I may cite the following from De Wette's *Kurzgefasstes Exeg. Handbuch in Matth.*: "The expression πτερύγιον τοῦ ἱεροῦ occurs besides only in Hegesippus as quoted by Eusebius, *H. E.* ii. 23, where it is related, that the Jews set James upon the πτερύγιον τοῦ ἱεροῦ, and hurled him down thence. Πτερύγιον (Hesych. ἀκρωτήριον) is used in the Septuagint for

Jesus had shewn so pious a regard, a promise of safety under just these very circumstances, amid which he was now seeking to place Him (Ps. xci. 11, 12).

Since the Tempter refers the safety of Jesus, in case of His complying with his suggestion, to the care of angels, it might at first sight be thought doubtful in what sense he used the expression, *the Son of God.* But since we find the Δαιμόνια knowing who He was, we do not seem warranted in assigning to the appellative here the merely Messianic sense in which it was most probably sometimes used by the Jews, but are rather led to suppose that the Adversary saw that the Humanity of our Lord was subject to the same conditions as applied to others; and that, therefore, he urges, in effect—that if the pious, in general, could look for such protection as the Psalmist describes, how much more might He, in whom all promises made to the good must find their highest accomplishment!

Cast Thyself down! Satan's purpose would seem to be, not altogether to tempt our blessed Lord to an act which he hoped might prove an act of self-destruction (as S. Jerome quoted by Bishop Taylor supposes). Indeed, that this was at all his view, may be regarded as uncertain, or even improbable; for attributing, as

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for כָּנָף *hem* of a garment, Num. xv. 38; 1 Sam. xxiv. 5. Now כָּנָף occurs Dan. ix. 27 [our Authorized Version has in the margin, *and upon the battlements shall be the idols of the desolation.* E. H.] probably in the sense of the extreme end, i. e. the top ridge of the roof (fastigium tecti), or the battlement. Consequently, this is pretty certainly the sense here."

he did, to Jesus as the Son of God the power to convert stones into bread, there is no sufficient reason for supposing that he thought Him incapable of securing His safety, even in casting himself down from the summit of Solomon's Porch.

Neither, again, is there any ground whatever for imagining that our Divine Lord would have really exposed Himself to any danger, if He had complied. He who walked upon the sea and ascended into heaven, could likewise have *prayed to His Father, and He would have sent Him angels* to waft Him down in safety from even that fearful elevation. He could, if He had so willed it, have saved Himself from the power of His enemies, even when in their hands (Matth. xxvi. 53); and He proved that He could (John xviii. 6). Indeed, by His answer to the solicitation, He shows that the sin which He was now tempted to commit, was not the sin of running into unnecessary danger; but that of calling for a display of the Divine hand, which the occasion and the Will of God did not render befitting.

There is another consideration, which shews that there was something else intended by this temptation besides a solicitation to an act of dangerous presumption. For why was the scene removed from the precipices of that wild and rugged wilderness and transferred now to the Temple?

The satisfactory solution is, that the temptation was designed to induce Him to make an ostentatious display of His powers in the sight of the crowded worshippers present in the holy precincts. He was to work a striking miracle, with no other aim than to

shew that He was able to work it. We may imagine our Lord standing on that giddy height, and attracting by His presence there the attention of the multitudes thronging the courts. The scene presented to His view (if it *was* only in imagination), might perhaps exhibit every eye rivetted upon Him;—all ready to accept Him as the Christ, if only He would prove His claim by some striking sign. To the universal feeling, Satan gives expression: *If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down!*

Now herein lay couched just that very temptation, by which the Lord Jesus Christ was afterwards so often assailed. It was always in His power, when encountering insult and contempt, by some display of miracle, to overpower all the opposition of His gainsayers, and at least abash them into silence, if not win them to His discipleship; and not unfrequently was He expressly called upon *to shew a sign from heaven*, for the purpose of vindicating His claims. Yet, in patient fulfilment of the will of His heavenly Father, He never did this. He never departed from the line of beneficence and spiritual instruction[25], in which alone it pleased His heavenly Father, *whose Law was in His heart*, that His miraculous agency should move. Ostentatious display never was with Him a motive for exerting His omnipotent power; no, nor even eagerness to force conviction, when it would have been only extorted by intellectual constraint,

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[25] On this subject the reader will find pleasure in perusing Dr. Mill's Fifth Sermon (p. 122, seq.), and the introductory observations of Mr. Trench in his Work on the Miracles.

and not have been the product of a believing heart[26].

Luke iv. 12. Matth. iv. 10. Our Lord meets the temptation once again with a quotation from Holy Writ[27]: Deut. vi. 6, *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God as thou temptedst Him at Massah.* This is illustrated by Exod. xvii. 7, *He called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel* [Meribah, *contention*], *and because they tempted the Lord* [Massah, *temptation*], *saying, Is the Lord among us or not? To tempt God* is to be dissatisfied with His appointment, and impatiently to call for some manifestation of His Power, beyond what He has seen fit to vouchsafe. This is *to put Him to proof* in a bad sense.

Now our Lord felt that He would have tempted God, if He had challenged His interposition on His behalf in the way which Satan had suggested. He might also have felt that others were guilty of the same sin who required more sign and miracle, when enough was vouchsafed to satisfy any heart which

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[26] S. Chrysostom has well pointed out the bearing of this temptation. Μετὰ πολλῆς τῆς ἐπιεικείας πάλιν ἀπὸ τῶν γραφῶν αὐτῷ διαλέγεται λέγων· οὐκ ἐκπειράσεις Κύριον τὸν Θεόν σου. παιδεύων ἡμᾶς, ὅτι τοῦ διαβόλου οὐ διὰ σημείων, ἀλλὰ δι' ἀνεξικακίας καὶ μακροθυμίας περιγίγνεσθαι χρή, καὶ μηδὲν πρὸς ἐπίδειξιν ποιεῖν καὶ φιλοτιμίαν ἁπλῶς.—εἰ γὰρ δύναμιν ἐπιδείξασθαι ἔδει, οὐχ ἑαυτὸν ῥιπτοῦντα εἰκῆ καὶ κρημνίζοντα, ἀλλ' ἑτέρους σώζοντα (*Homil.* xiii. *in Matth*).

[27] Both here, and in the passage quoted by Satan from the Psalms, the words are taken exactly from the Septuagint; with some omission only in the latter case. In vv. 10 and 11 of S. Luke, the ὅτι is evidently *that* as in v. 4, although found in the Septuagint of Ps. xci. 11.

was disposed to follow the Divine teaching. This might leave it, at first sight, doubtful in which way the quotation was designed to apply. As, however, He was encountering a temptation which was intended to solicit His own heart to sin, it is best to understand it as meant in reference to Himself. He expresses, therefore, thereby, that He durst not gratify others by soliciting the interposition of Divine power in an occasion, in which He did not believe that He would be warranted in so doing.

Matth. iv. 11. Mark i. 13. After the foiled and defeated Adversary had at last relieved the holy Saviour of his hateful presence,—to return, however, again *in the hour of darkness* in tenfold horror (Luke xxii. 53. John xiv. 30), on which account S. Luke says, ἀπέστη ἄχρι καιροῦ—we learn from S. Matthew and S. Mark that a Divine solace and refreshment were accorded both to the Body and the Spirit of Jesus by the ministry of angels. *Behold, angels came and ministered unto Him.* That this included bodily refreshment, is probable both from the use of the same expression in Matth. viii. 15, and also from His present need of such relief. But how much greater the solace, which such a token of His Father's love and of heavenly sympathy must have afforded to His Spirit!

Thus the Temptation by which our Lord was assailed in the wilderness, and which represented the whole course of similar trial which He had afterwards to pass through, was crowned with a banquet of heavenly satisfactions;—a banquet, which in turn likewise shadowed forth *the joy that was set before*

Him (Hebr. xii. 2), to be realised after His whole earthly conflict should have been completed, and He should have passed into His glory. Thus it appears to us, viewed objectively; and if the subjective interpretation of the whole Temptation which I have attempted to illustrate, represents it in its true character, then also we may, humbly and reverentially, conclude, that the recollection of this extraordinary feast of heavenly Love furnished in the wilderness, was designed to fortify His Humanity in many a subsequent hour of weary encounter, and to sustain Its sinking energies with the consoling assurance of eternal felicity and triumph, prepared speedily to crown His completed work.

THE END.

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